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DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 8

19980528 100

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JPRS-EER-89-123

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GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Emigration, Renewed Dissent Mark Republic's 40th Anniversary

90EG0021A Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German
No 41, 9 Oct 89 pp 18-19, 21-27

[Unattributed article: "Their Patience Is at an End"; first paragraph is DER SPIEGEL introduction]

[Text] The mood in the GDR is as bad as it has ever been in the 40-year history of the state. But the SED [Socialist Unity Party of Germany] leadership, protected from the people by a huge contingent of police, celebrated as though nothing had happened. Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet conveyor of hope, played along: the GDR can solve its own problems.

At Berlin-Schoenefeld Airport, while waiting for the guest of honor Mikhail Gorbachev from Moscow, the chairman of the GDR State Council went out of his way to appear relaxed; he allowed himself to get involved in an exchange of words with journalists, something that does not happen very often.

The state of his health? "Those declared dead live longer," said Erich Honecker. And what can he say about the demonstrations and scuffles between people's police and demonstrators in Leipzig and Dresden? Honecker: All of that is in NEUES DEUTSCHLAND. "Everything is normal in Leipzig and Dresden, all are going about their work."

Honecker's demonstrative imperturbability was in striking contrast to the increasingly hectic nature of the security agencies. The television of the GDR did not, as is usual, broadcast the Russian's arrival live. Otherwise it might have had to broadcast the cries "Gorbi help!" as well. NEUES DEUTSCHLAND had not even reported the time of his arrival.

When Gorbachev laid a wreath at the memorial Unter den Linden in East Berlin last Friday, the bruisers of the state security and FDJ [Free Germany Youth] dominated the scene. The Kremlin chief approached the journalists unmoved. In response to the question: "Is the current situation in the GDR dangerous?" he said cheerfully: "I think not. The problem here is nothing in comparison with our problem. We are already hardened and nothing can surprise us any more."

Gorbachev's speech at the ceremony, eagerly awaited throughout the GDR, was disappointing: no exhortation about glasnost and perestroika, no criticism of his SED comrades. "We do not doubt," said Gorbachev, "that the SED is able to find answers to the questions that are stirring its citizens." The GDR is a "proven friend and ally." Its problems would be resolved "not in Moscow but in Berlin."

As a precaution, the border troops had almost completely closed the entrances to East Berlin from West Berlin at this time.

The Germans and their two states were the focus of the world last week. In the East and West, there were pictures of people laughing and crying as they went over fences and walls, fleeing their homeland and abandoning their homes, friends and relatives; a thrashing but helpless state authority that attempts to guard the railroad stations through which the fugitive trains passed against their own population; an ancient and sullen group of political notables that celebrated the 40th anniversary of the GDR as though nothing had happened.

An era is coming to an end. The regime in East Berlin that has survived to this day from the cold war and the times of the confrontation of the blocs will have to change.

At the same time, Erich Honecker and his squad of old men really could not have wished for better conditions for the jubilee.

The GDR guarantees its population the highest standard of living within the Eastern Bloc; its State Council chairman enjoyed the solemnity of a state visit in the Elysee Palace and even prepared to be admitted to the Court of St. James's and, finally—the crowning of his 18 years in power—to be received by representatives of the world power the United States.

Everything seemed to be going well with the West Germans as well. In the fall of last year, Bonn's guard battalion saluted the status-conscious native of the Saarland and Chancellor Kohl called off his Steel Helmets. Oskar Lafontaine, the prime minister of the Saar and presumable chancellor candidate of the opposition for the 1990's, had imposed his various visits on his compatriot in office. Coexistence a la mode?

In truth, however, nothing behind the Brandenburg Gate was and is right any more. The 17 million East Germans are no longer playing the game.

Whereas Gorbachev on the side of the top celebrant had to stand up to the homage of the parading masses, the critical component in East Germany no longer wants to wait in resigned perseverance. Perestroika in the Soviet Union, the beginning of reforms in Hungary, a pluralistic party landscape in the Polish Sejm with a noncommunist Catholic head of government—the stormy development has also broken some dams in the GDR.

The SED regime has its back to the wall. If Erich Honecker and his people close the safety valve again after the confounded 7th of October, they must count on a revolt of those left behind that could exceed by far the national uprising on 17 June 1953. An intervention in the GDR by the protective power USSR, itself in a fever of reform, can hardly be expected. But if Honecker and his followers yield to the internal pressure for reform, they themselves will be in danger of being washed away.

What Honecker could do before 7 October, he has now done—at the last minute. The GDR, exposed to public ridicule in the East and West, had to let the refugees in Prague and Warsaw go to the West.

Honecker personally gave permission for them to travel. And again the world saw unimaginable pictures. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the foreign minister in Bonn, said last Sunday on the balcony of his embassy in Prague: "We have come to you to tell you that this evening your departure..." Genscher's words were drowned in their frenzy of joy.

The embassies in Prague and Warsaw had hardly been vacated when other thousands climbed over the fences and demanded an unhindered departure to the FRG. Honecker again had to relent if he wanted to pull off his jubilee.

But before it came to this "annexation solution" (Genscher), the crisis management seemed to be coming unhinged. Not just the people in Bonn were bowled over. Initially the members of the Politburo in East Berlin, who were duped even much worse, seemed to be speechless.

In this situation, Hans-Dietrich Genscher reached for the telephone. The foreign minister had himself connected with the British publisher Robert Maxwell in East Berlin's Grand Hotel: perhaps in a conversation with Honecker Maxwell could transmit the gratitude of the Federal Government and also express the concern about the renewed flood of refugees into the embassy building in Prague.

The British publisher of an autobiography on Honecker reported that same evening. He had the foreign minister in Augustusburg Castle, where the Finnish president of state was being entertained, called to the telephone: Honecker is very interested in good relations with the FRG; there will be a "solution" in the matter of the refugees. Chief of the Federal Chancellery Rudolf Seiters was allowed to announce Honecker's second concession publicly.

The GDR on 7 October: a mournful state, from which the people are fleeing, because they see no future in the "first socialist workers' and peasants' state" and because they have given up hope of reforms.

But what should the old Politburo bosses do? They have practically no choice. Opposition is forming everywhere in the country.

Last Wednesday, when the news reached the citizens of Saxony that the trek from Prague was again going to pass by them, thousands traveled to the railroad track. They besieged railroad stations and stops between Dresden and Plauen and for a long time did not even allow themselves to be driven away by beatings from the People's Police. There were scuffles in Dresden, with dozens of injured. Several hundred were arrested and the central city had to be cordoned off. Only after hours were

the railroad stations free and the stopped trains able to pass. The car doors were locked, so that no one on the way through the GDR could jump on board and be pulled into the train, as happened in the first wave of departures.

"We did not see a single citizen," related a young chemical specialist from Karl-Marx-Stadt after arriving at Hof in Bavaria. "Everywhere, where the train traveled only a little more slowly, was blocked." And a young couple from Plauen, who were "once again rocked through the homeland" during the night, observed that all plants along the line that normally work through the night were dark: "They even sent the workers home so that no one could come near the track."

At the same time, about 50 of their countrymen besieged the U.S. Embassy in East Berlin, driven by the hope that they could join the 18 citizens of the GDR that had managed to penetrate the building closely guarded by marines. They were taken into custody by people's police, dragged with their screaming children to trucks and driven away.

The shock that the pictures from Prague and Warsaw evoked among the people of the GDR produced a qualitative leap in the political awareness of the overwhelming majority. "It really made an impression in the GDR," says the painter Baerbel Bohley, cofounder of the citizen's initiative "New Forum" and well on the way to becoming the opposition's Joan of Arc. "The patience of the people is at an end."

Last Monday evening after the traditional peace service in the Nikolay Church, 15,000 people marched through the center of Leipzig spontaneously and in an unorganized and peaceful manner. They shouted "democracy—now or never" and "freedom, equality, fraternity." And the crowd defiantly clamored: "We are staying here" and "Erich quit the nonsense and let perestroika in."

That is something that has not happened in the GDR since 17 June 1953 and this rebellion has not been forgotten in the SED leadership. "They have understood from the trauma of 17 June that they could hang from a post," said Katja Havemann, the wife of Robert Havemann, the deceased physicist and opposition leader.

It seems that no one in the 40th year of the republic is any longer concerned about the threats and prohibitions of the socialist authorities. At a worship service in Schwerin, 900 citizens inscribed their names in the membership roll of the New Forum, even though Interior Minister Friedrich Dickel had just recently declared the association to be a subversive organization.

In East Berlin, a new opposition group under the name "Democratic Awakening" (DA) formed last Sunday, although the police had made a massive effort to prevent the approximately 80 founding members from all parts of the republic from taking part in the "unapproved meeting." Nevertheless, 60 made it through and met in a

private apartment and in a protestant parish home, coming to an understanding by telephone on the respective state of the discussion.

Among the initiators of DA are the pastors Rainer Eppelmann (East Berlin) and Friedrich Schorlemmer (Wittenberg) and the Rostock lawyer Wolfgang Schnur, who for years has been looking after most of the conscientious objectors between Stralsund and Suhl. They want to set up well-organized groups throughout the country that will immediately be able to come forward as an alternative to the established bloc parties in the next election in the GDR.

At the present time, the SED does not even have its own people under control. The 61-year-old professor of law Manfred Gerlach, chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPD) and Honecker's deputy in the State Council, criticized the ruling SED for the second time.

"What liberal democrats are concerned about today," said Gerlach at a party celebration of the 110th anniversary of the publicist Carl von Ossietzky, "is the fact that political vigilance is also beginning to turn against citizens who, in following their democratic understanding of humanism, want to cooperate in the building of socialism but are in danger of being shut out as obstructionists.... Objections are not opposition."

Artists and scientists, who heretofore have kept their mouths tightly shut out of concern for their large and small privileges, are suddenly declaring themselves in resolutions to be in favor of glasnost and perestroika. In view of the "current crisis situation," there should be public discussions about what is to happen now in the East German society marked by "paralysis and rapid degeneration," wrote 300 graphic artists from East Berlin.

The members of the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra unanimously issued an appeal: "The present events and the fact that tens of thousands are leaving the country legally and illegally and that there is increasing disappointment and resignation over inadequate prospects in all social strata and age groups of the population.... The discrimination of those of a different opinion is intolerable."

Twenty-five members of the state opera refused to play for the 40th anniversary on 7 October. The chief director of the state opera left the SED in protest of the stubbornness of the party leaders.

In the theater, it is almost as though there is no longer a State Security Ministry. At East Berlin's Theater in the Palace, where Heiner Mueller's "Quartett" was part of the program last Monday, the author stepped before the curtain prior to the start of the evening and said that the management had asked him to help out as a leading male actor, because the actual hero as well as the director had "gotten lost in the disorders of the time."

Mueller under the ringing applause of the public: "Please have no fear about me wanting to earn my future bread as an actor. It is a matter of a one-time humanitarian measure."

At the Institute for Mathematics of the East Berlin Academy of Sciences, pent-up frustration was vented in letters on the bulletin board—signed with the full name. "If contradictions promote development," read one, "then we ought to be not far from a great leap forward."

The thorn of rebelliousness has long since caught hold of structures of the SED. "The time when the comrades in the party meeting looked at their watches in boredom are gone for good," said a comrade triumphantly.

In the primary organizations of the SED, the members not only talk themselves feverish but they also send their demands to the top, something heretofore unthinkable in the strictly run SED. In a brief to Egon Krenz, the SED members of a renowned publishing house demanded a new party statute that recognizes the diversity of opinion in the SED as well as the secret election of all bodies.

In the large cities of the republic last week, the people's police in their green uniforms were ubiquitous, whereas the civilians from the State Security Ministry, who are generally recognizable by their reserved behavior but who could easily have touched off the wrath of the people, remained almost invisible.

Erich Honecker and his people did not want the liturgy of the jubilee with torchlight processions, taps, a military parade and public festivals in all parts of the city to be completely ruined—especially not under the eyes of their Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev.

Meanwhile, the SED leadership is trying to calm the upset comrades with the assertion that the GDR leadership will soon do more to facilitate travel to the West. Then citizens of the GDR could also vacation in Greece or the FRG and those without relatives in the West could even do so for national currency.

Despite this promise, the SED rulers first had operational combat forces deployed along the borders with Poland and the CSSR to reinforce the Border Troop—just to be on the safe side to prevent a mass breakthrough of compatriots to the east. The Berlin Wall, which the SED calls an anti-Fascist protective wall, will be supplemented by an antisocialist wall around East Germany. The GDR is setting up a hedgehog defense.

But how is the SED to get out of the greatest crisis of its regime? For the present, no one really knows in the East German state party either.

Put down the spirit of rebellion and let the tanks roll as in the case of Beijing's Square of Heavenly Peace? They can hardly order that. To be sure, the security apparatus is still intact but—for the time being anyway—there are no suitable grounds such as burning party offices or attacks against officials and secret police.

The fraternal socialist states, especially the Soviet Union, are no longer available to keep order. Moscow let it be known that Gorbachev would not have come to East Berlin if the helpless GDR leadership had not ended the misery in the FRG's embassies in Prague and Warsaw or even if it had resorted to the use of force at home.

In the Soviet Embassy in Bonn last Thursday, it was made known that Soviet troops would not intervene if it were to come to mass demonstrations and even shooting in the GDR—provided that the West would also restrain itself. The GDR must look for political solutions.

And Central Committee department head Valentin Falin made it clear in conversations in Bonn last week that Moscow would have accepted such an application of force only during the time of the cold war. Now, however, in the midst of the process of restructuring relations between East and West, one must see to it that the GDR does not become the sick child of Europe.

The top leadership of the GDR must and will move, according to the downright imploring statements of Helmut Kohl's chancellery and the Foreign Ministry. An Erich Honecker who lets trainloads of refugees from the republic roll through his own sovereign territory can no longer expect his remaining citizens to accept a wall and barbed wire.

The Federal Government is counting on the principle of hope and is expecting additional important steps to follow Gorbachev's departure. The GDR leadership will:

- make the border to the West more porous and approve departure applications from GDR citizens more quickly and generously than in the past;
- give increasing latitude to the private economy in the GDR, especially handicrafts and small industry, and permit more joint ventures and mixed West-East industrial enterprises;
- allow the beginning of a general liberalization in the country, which should include a partial introduction of freedom of the press as well as greater independence of the bloc parties from the SED.

Bonn would like to help the GDR get started. The chancellor publicly offered East Berlin generous economic assistance and cooperation "under the precondition" that "political and economic reforms will bring the people in the GDR a bit more freedom and more opportunities to be able to lead their own lives."

If everything goes well on the 40th anniversary of the GDR, Kohl wants to make a new attempt this week at a conversation with Honecker. And he is prepared to visit the GDR when changes get going.

Kohl's foreign-policy adviser Horst Teltschik relayed to Yuliy Kwizinskiy, the Soviet ambassador in Bonn, the chancellor's personal greeting to Gorbachev with the

assurance that he will "observe literally" the joint treaties and statements but that he is concerned about the refugees and the developments in the GDR.

Two days later, Kwizinskiy reported that Kohl's message had been received with interest in Moscow. Gorbachev is endeavoring to find solutions in the sense of the jointly agreed policy.

The SPD has already made its contribution. SPD chief Hans-Jochen Vogel wrote to Gorbachev, saying that the SPD is hoping for a development such as in the Soviet Union, Hungary and Poland "in the GDR as well." The SPD linked its expectation that in the future in the other Germany "critical forces will be able to express themselves and organize freely" with the promise that it will "neither organize nor finance such an opposition as hitherto" but will likely "support it morally and politically."

Foreign Minister Genscher is counting entirely upon Honecker, despite all the rumors about the state of the health of the old comrade. They probably should reckon with the 77-year-old head of state and party in the future as well. He may want to put himself at the head of the forces of reform in the SED, for he has to ensure his life work.

Moscow is also exerting pressure. Last week in Bonn, Falin openly criticized East Berlin's stubbornness: a dynamic society always needs renewal. There will always be problems when the pace of the reformers remains behind the pace of the general development. "Frankly, the entire situation in the GDR and with respect to the GDR is disturbing."

Gorbachev did not want to quarrel with the old Honecker in the republic's official ceremony. But he intended—at least that is what they were saying in advance in Bonn—to talk seriously in the internal conversation with the SED Politburo. Much is at stake for the Soviet reformer. If the national uprising were to break out in the GDR because of the East Berlin's immobility, Gorbachev's opponents to reform at home could triumph, saying that this is the result of the breakneck experiment with glasnost and perestroyka.

But even if the GDR leadership now reluctantly condescends to reforms, is it not already too late?

A careful relaxation, which a few months ago might have diminished the pressure in the country, can no longer be sufficient today. The more time passes, the fewer opportunities there will be for the SED to hold on to a major piece of its old power in the general uprising.

Genscher presents the example of Hungary and Poland to counteract the worries of SED officials that they could be swept away by the change in the GDR. The fact that the transition from the old to the new time is taking place relatively peacefully there must encourage the GDR apparatus.

Hans-Dietrich Genscher has been successful several times in his career in using an effective slogan to pocket an important theme for himself.

He will present a "Europe Plan," Genscher announced, a scenario under which the East Europeans including the Germans in the GDR could be integrated into the EEC. Genscher's colleagues in the Foreign Ministry registered the verbal creation of their boss with surprise. Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Juergen Sudhoff: "I do not know what he is trying to do."

Jacques Delors, head of the EEC Commission in Brussels, inquired with concern about the content of Genscher's project. Delors fears that grand European plans could hinder the agreed process of uniting the existing EEC.

At a lunch last Thursday, Genscher calmed his guest from Brussels: he continues to support the planned currency union in the EEC and the unification of the internal market by the end of 1992. But the EEC must open itself for the socialist neighbors in the East that are willing to undertake reforms.

The rapid development in Poland and Hungary in the direction of pluralistic democracies with national economies organized under market principles and the increasing pressure on East Berlin to join the course of reform have fired the imagination of not just Genscher.

A federative association of the European states from Portugal to beyond Poland, a huge market with more than 500 million people, flourishing trade and increasing prosperity as in the current EEC—what was unthinkable just a year ago now suddenly seems possible to many political strategists. The best thing about it is that the German problem would be resolved in an elegant manner and the FRG and GDR would be embedded in a Grand European Economic Community—GEEC instead of EEC.

The rough outline of the plan already exists. In a first step, the interested parties beyond the opened Iron Curtain will be linked with the EEC with bilateral trade and cooperative agreements. The EEC has already entered into such trade-promoting agreements with Hungary, Poland and the CSSR. The GDR is negotiating.

The Treaties of Rome, the basic law of the EEC, would also permit the next stage of the rapprochement. Association agreements in accordance with Article 238 of these treaties would bring the East European states even closer to the EEC.

The content of the association could be tailored to each country—from the coordination of economic and currency policy to complete freedom of movement and almost full membership. This second step is "soon imaginable," at least for some East Bloc countries such as Hungary, according to Genscher's minister of state Irmgard Adam-Schwaetzer.

The more the EEC grows together at an accelerated pace, however, the higher will be the demands that the new arrivals have to fulfill. Delors made it clear once again last week that the community is not prepared to slow down its own unification process or even to change its direction.

If the EEC does not wait, then the Eastern countries will have to catch up—a sheer unsolvable task. A convertible currency, for example—a precondition for joining the EEC—is conceivable only if the economic capacity does not remain too far behind the level of the EEC. Reforms and freedom and a market economy are the indispensable precondition for this. For the time being, however, experts are ruling out such a change, especially in the economic area.

The economy of the GDR seems mysterious to many in the East and West. The country is easily the most stable economic power of the socialist community but for years the citizens of the GDR have had the unmistakable feeling that things are just going downhill.

"Is not, according to our official statistics, the productivity of our economy increasing markedly from year to year?" recently asked the 85-year-old Juergen Kuczynski, the Nestor of the East German economists social scientists. "Are not the material costs declining from year to year? But where are the results of this development for our life?"

Kuczynski hits the misery precisely. A country is building a growing number of computers but one cannot buy one for home use. The prototypes of 1-megabit chips and 32-bit microprocessors are praised effusively in NEUES DEUTSCHLAND but the store shelves are lacking up-to-date entertainment electronics.

They are proud of the production of glass fiber cable but the average consumer in the capital Berlin must wait considerably more than 10 years for a telephone connection. A roll has cost 5 pfennigs for decades but meanwhile a good pair of shoes costs over 300 marks.

More than 3.2 million apartments have been built or modernized since 1971. With about 16.5 million inhabitants, according to statistics, the GDR has a stock of about 7 million apartments. But hundreds of thousands are still looking for a modest home.

Industry in the GDR manufactures comparatively efficient excavators and up-to-date ships and polygraph machines but it cannot guarantee the supply of dowels, bathing caps, garlic presses, or eggbeaters.

The state planners plug up a hole here and open up hundreds of new ones—a socialist Sisyphean task.

Besides the weaknesses in the system, many individual causes can be distinguished for this misery: halfhearted reforms such as the greater independence of the large combines are preceding only slowly, because the state planners around SED Politburo member Guenther Mittag are afraid of their own courage. According to

experts, the combines can work more efficiently only when they are allowed to sell their own products in the world market and reinvest the profit. But that is not allowed.

Fateful mistakes in the past are also causing the country trouble. Thus, the unilateral orientation toward domestic brown coal as an energy source have by no means brought the desired independence from imports.

In addition, the maintenance and development of the own energy basis eat up about 12 billion marks every year—money that is urgently needed for environmental protection and for innovations in other industrial branches. The power plants and boiler houses release 5 million tons of sulfur dioxide into the air annually; that is the more than anywhere else in the world, as is the almost 320 million tons of crude lignite that will have to be mined this year.

With such outlays, not much is left for promising investments for the future. Money thereby actually plays only a secondary role in the GDR. Not only the majority of the citizens, who have more than 150 billion marks in savings accounts, but also almost every enterprise can come up with money. But the situation is similar for both: the citizen has to wait 15 years for an automobile and the enterprise stands in line at the Planning Commission for the allocation of machinery, equipment, and construction capacities. Frequently it is the one with the best connections who prevails—corruption in its real socialist version.

The black market and shadow economy have long since established themselves in the daily life of the GDR. Managers would rather arrange reciprocal deliveries in a beer tavern than send investment requests to the State Planning Commission.

Unsuccessful developments and inefficiency are thus programmed. This is especially fateful, because the GDR is much more dependent upon exports than other countries. Half of the East German national income (roughly comparable with the gross national product) is realized through foreign trade. The world average is about 17 percent.

To be sure, the GDR still has a foot in the door of the world market with its opportunities for foreign exchange, but the gate is threatening to shut. The state already has to spend well over 4 marks domestically to gain 1 mark in foreign exchange. And the trend is rising. It was just under two and half marks at the beginning of the 1980's.

Beyond that, the quality of goods made in the GDR has continued to decline in recent years, not least because of the obsolete machinery and deficient technology. The GDR has lost a lot of ground even in its previous domain, the building of machines and installations. The share of GDR machine building exports to the OECD states fell from 3.9 to 0.9 percent between 1973 and 1986.

If the GDR was nevertheless able to meet its payments obligations and to show an export surplus in recent years, that was achieved almost exclusively through drastic restrictions of imports. They declined from 11.1 to 8.7 billion marks between 1981 and 1987.

Not only the plants are suffering but also the consumers. The curbing of expensive agricultural imports from the West, for example, had a direct effect on the quality and quantity of the supply of meat and cheese. Semiluxuries such as chocolate, tropical fruits or tolerable coffee are either not available or can be bought only for horrendous prices in delicatessens or—for Western money—in Inter-shop.

The system of subsidies for foodstuffs—from bread to potatoes—is completely antiquated. In the Dresden District, a fruit buyer from the state trade organization (HO) recently made a painful discovery. The fruit that he bought from peasants and small-scale gardeners at highly subsidized prices disappeared inexplicably quickly a little later from the HO stores, where it was being sold at the much lower retail price. The solution to the enigma: the sly gardeners were buying back their own fruit and selling it to the HO for a second time—a real existing economic cycle.

The “unity of economic and social policy”—low rents and cheap basic foodstuffs—postulated by Honecker is now showing unpleasant results: the bleak satellite towns are already in need of renewal and historic city centers are decaying, because there are not sufficient funds for renovation. Artificially cheap foodstuffs are rotting by the ton and the wage leveling is stifling the incentive to work.

In the opinion of GDR social scientist Manfred Loetsch, the development will inevitably lead to a leveling out at a low standard. The scientist from the GDR Academy of Sciences is calling not only for toleration of social differences but also for their deliberate acceptance so as to stimulate output for the society.

But innovative thinking and true competition cannot function if the SED wants to maintain its monopoly over opinion and decisions and strictly regulate development through the plan.

How a new and different socialism ought to look is something about which they are increasingly racking their brains in the circles and forums of the incipient opposition. There is no shortage of specialists who want to get the economy of the GDR moving again through perestroika; many managers have learned to get along with shortages and difficulties. What many lack, however, is the visionary spirit.

Hubert Kroker, once chief of the Erfurt enterprise Umformtechnik, once spent 80 percent of his time thinking about future developments and necessary changes; he was sent into the wilderness for a long time. General Director Wolfgang Biermann from Carl Zeiss Jena, keen on rapid spectacular successes, advanced to

be the favorite manager of the SED leadership and is considered a candidate for a seat in the Politburo.

The latest developments in the economy of the GDR and the tense situation in the country seem to be passing Erich Honecker without leaving a mark, despite Bonn's hopes that he will come to reason.

With youthful enthusiasm just as in his days with the FDJ, he announced last Friday at the ceremony for the 40th birthday in East Berlin: "Always forward, never backwards."

HUNGARY

MSZMP CC Report to Congress

90EC0029A Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian
10 Oct 89 pp 2-8

[Text of MSZMP [Hungarian Socialist Workers Party] Central Committee Report and Proposals to the 14th MSZMP Congress]

[Text] In contrast to previous practice, the written report of the Central Committee [CC] does not endeavor to make a political analysis of the year and a half that has passed since the May 1988 party conference. Rather it attempts, while reviewing the important events of the recent epochal months, to summarize the political processes that are decisive for the party, and to draw conclusions to define the immediate tasks of our renewing movement.

I. The First Steps of Transformation

1. Hungary is facing a historical choice: Either it will succeed in closing the gap between itself and the world's developed countries or it will sink even deeper into stagnation. The choice implies great risk and historical responsibility. The roots of transformation reach back to the 1970s, when we were late in reacting to the decisive changes in the global economy. Thus, we are now faced simultaneously with difficulties posed by economic adjustment and with those created by our wish to surpass the earlier models of socialism. This is complicated by the fact that we are compelled to find solutions to problems calling for international collaboration within an essentially national framework.

2. The May 1988 party conference called for a break with socioeconomic stagnation and political conservatism. The MSZMP's new leadership had to face serious inherited burdens: huge external indebtedness brought about by a combination of major changes in the global economy and our mistaken economic policies, an economic structure that has been barely developed for a decade, social tensions created by a declining standard of living, the lack of perspectives for our youth, and the fact that, after the previous period of rapprochement, the nation's intellectuals had again started to distance themselves from the party.

Due to the stagnation of the socioeconomic circumstances and the system of political institutions, the party was not operating as a political movement. Its top leadership increasingly relied on administrative methods and the monopolization of decisionmaking to govern political life, and strove to conserve existing power relationships.

In our ideological activities, we neglected the examination of real theoretical issues. In spite of this, and because of our anxiety to prevent the restoration that has occurred during the 1970's, during the early 1980's we managed to depart from a simplistic interpretation of socialism. This meant the end of the dualism of the previous period—the practical combination of relatively unified ideological and pragmatic politics. However, as the model of the 1960's and 1970's, which was based on rapid economic growth and the swift and spectacular rise in the standard of living, lost its justification, this also brought about a dissolution of the earlier consensus that was based upon a relative degree of well-being. The economic crisis gradually took on political aspects.

3. The May 1988 party conference proposed that substantive economic changes could not be implemented without radical innovations in the system of political institutions and the party. These two conditions are also inevitable in the implementation of urgent economic modernization measures and in the development of a viable market economy. Thus, the MSZMP devoted its energies to eliminating the overemphasis on politics and disassembling the party-state, while striving to rapidly develop the institutions of a market economy.

4. Members of the new leadership considered it their main task to solve the economic crisis—to find a way out while consolidating the situation. This resulted in the introduction of measures to remove the obstacles to the influx of foreign capital, the development of means to aid that influx, and the promulgation of laws governing [economic] association and transformation. In 1989 the government liberalized wage and price management. The economic relationships we formed with several developed countries exceeded all previous relationships.

5. There was discussion of rationalizing the operation of the state and transforming the government into a body that is accountable to the National Assembly. In this regard, we assigned an outstanding role to the process of creating a constitution. Following a thorough preparation by experts, we were presented with an internationally redognized constitutional concept, upon which we could confidently base the institutions of a constitutional state. The regulatory concepts that include the separation of powers also contain conditions for the operation of political pluralism. New, modern state institutions (president of the Republic, constitutional courts, etc.) are being created. We have reformulated human and civic rights in accord with international treaties. In order to separate party and state, we took several important steps which have the shared goal of creating autonomy for state organs and making the party a genuine political

movement. We introduced major decisions to eliminate the party's monopoly over power. On socialist pluralism, however, we remained within the framework of the May 1988 party conference, and more or less envisioned the democratization of our political life within a single-party system.

6. By critically evaluating the past in order to avoid earlier mistakes, and by creating an attractive program that proclaims a new and modern form of socialism, the MSZMP's leadership attempted to broaden its scope of activities. Members of the leadership assigned this task to several committees. In publishing the essay produced by the historical subcommittee, we came closer to a more realistic understanding of our recent past. However, as a result of the rapidly accelerating events in domestic political life, the historical debates became saturated with actual political content. Instead of realistic evaluation of the past, campaigns of reevaluation became increasingly frequent, with a tendency to repeat the mistakes of the earlier scheme, only this time from the other extreme.

7. Since May 1988, certain changes have occurred in the area of political openness that can be called revolutionary. The party leadership has supported the changes in the press and in book publishing, recognizing in practice that our system of political institutions can be democratized only if reforms are introduced in the areas of political publicity and information. The party no longer exercises direct control over the dissemination of information. Parallel to those changes, the new social organizations and parties, driven by the natural impulse to create bases for themselves, consider it one of their most important activities to make their appearance at the national level, utilizing every available forum. The dynamic nature of this process was not expected by the party leadership and most of its members. It is especially disconcerting that, in addition to positive and innovative pronouncements, we see extreme and at times openly anticommunist statements in our mass media, which at times remain unanswered.

8. It was expected by the party's leadership that the urge to participate in political life, along with the increased independence of the middle and lower levels, would greatly increase membership activity. This expectation was reinforced by the fact that the new leadership was elected as a result of demands from the members. Central party organs did not directly interfere with the lives of middle- and lower-level party organs, which, of course, also meant that they offered no help in solving the problems accumulating at these levels. What is more, we must admit that party organs at various levels continued to make political decisions without the substantive participation of members. As a result, at the lower and middle levels, the party continued to turn inwards and became primarily occupied by personal power struggles. On the other hand, this made it possible to remove useless and corrupt functionaries, and allowed new and talented leaders to appear on the scene.

It is a peculiar contradiction of the changed situation that even the positive decisions and radical reform measures have created tensions in the relationship between the Central Committee and the membership. These are inevitable in the process of transformation, but it is undeniable that by accelerating certain reforms and introducing rapid series of change we have also contributed to them. We have frequently neglected to consider that the pace of renewal and reform may create a sense of destabilization among a significant portion of our members. Thus, even those reform steps with which we can identify in retrospect may have contributed to the schism between the leadership and the party members, and this has also expressed in the decline in membership.

9. The party leadership nurtured illusions not only concerning the membership's readiness to act, but also concerning its own unity. This was discernible on such issues as the Bos-Nagymaros river barrage system, the evaluation of the 1956 revolution and the Kadar era, the question of the multiparty system, and the differences of opinion concerning the pace, direction, and interrelation of economic and political processes. The problem was caused by the fact that the debates did not take place before party forums, or at the meetings of top party organizations, or if they did, they did so only in response to issues raised in the mass media. This demonstrated that there is insufficient cooperation among certain leaders of the party, and at times even an absence of solidarity. The MSZMP's internal schism was not limited to the top leadership; even the membership and elements previously sympathetic to the party were divided by such issues as the interpretation of the transformation or the pace of reforms.

10. Independent organizational efforts have been made by those forces within the party that have not accepted the measures aimed at the radical transformation of our system of political institutions and the creation of a market economy. Defending socialism, they attacked the political course of the Central Committee, thereby contributing to the survival of mistrust in the MSZMP's renewal.

As late as the end of 1988, primarily among the younger party cadres and intellectuals, there appeared to be no sign of change in direction at the middle level. Due to the delays in such urgent matters as generational changes, the demolition of the party state, and the party's structural reform, there were more and more reform forces organizing, which began to focus their attention on radical changes and wished to actively participate in shaping party policies. The reform movement that developed is simultaneously proof and catalyst of the party's internal renewal, however it is not free of a certain degree of extremism.

11. Beginning in the autumn of 1988, the opposition made spectacular advances. The dissatisfaction of the intellectuals, previously limited to the cultural sphere, flooded the mass media with elemental force, and thus

came to be expressed in an open political form. Additional difficulties were presented by issues that have long been considered untouchable—such as the problems related to ethnic issues or the contradictions of environmental protection—and these all provided opportunities for anti-MSZMP attacks. The party leadership did not use the old administrative methods in reacting to the opposition organizations; instead, correctly, it tried to find political solutions. Moreover, the law of association, based on the principles of socialist pluralism, even created opportunities for legally organizing the opposition.

The next turn of events was brought on by the MSZMP CC meeting held on 10-11 February 1989. In an attempt to fend off the threat of schism within the party, the CC accepted the principle of a multiparty system, and thus chose the course leading toward a change in the social model. With the start of trilateral negotiating sessions, events accelerated considerably.

12. The outcome of events that took place during the spring of 1989 was that new opportunities in political life prompted all organizations able to express their interests to take a more radical stance. Faced with increasingly severe problems, the government did not enjoy a greater freedom to act, even while the trade unions representing various labor groups, the agrarian sector, the entrepreneurs, and those employed in the infrastructure came forward with increasingly urgent demands.

13. After the February CC meeting, sharp debate among party leaders continued. In April, an attempt was made to introduce measures aimed at reorganization, but it failed, and by early summer the party's top leadership became disorganized. Burdened by the pressure exerted through the mass media, the party membership was unable to do more than observe the deepening crisis. Increasingly greater differences were apparent among the various trends, and each trend tried to find leaders. This process became fully formalized when several party leaders enlisted themselves in the ranks of these trends. There was a growth in activities aimed at creating factions within the party, and the June CC meeting was preceded by a definite air of party schism.

The creation of the party presidium and the Political Management Committee demonstrated the CC's commitment to reform and its readiness to compromise; however, this has also radicalized the party's extremists.

II. Domestic Power Relations and the State of Our Party

1. The situation of the party is decisively influenced by the fact that the prestige of its leadership has greatly deteriorated, its operation is surrounded by a general air of mistrust, and its activities are not considered satisfactory, either by the majority of the membership or by the various "trends." These factors are behind those organizational demands that proclaim the party's complete decentralization and the local cells' independence from the central leadership.

Party membership exceeds 720,000, which is 10 percent less than a year ago. During the first half of 1989 about 37,000 individuals resigned their membership, increasingly giving political reasons for their decision. Nevertheless, we should not talk about a landslide; for a variety of reasons, the majority of members remain faithful to the party. One cause for worry is that the majority of those leaving are industrial or blue collar workers. Another negative factor is represented in the behavior of those leaders who are leaving the party. This unfavorable trend is reinforced by the fact that very few people are joining the party, and even fewer of these are young. The moral pressure brought on by the revision of past events and the assignment of responsibility for the present crisis is made even more oppressive by the propaganda of the opposition, and party members find this difficult to bear. In addition, most of them are struggling with the same existential and material problems that other members of society are struggling with.

As for the party apparatus, since it was deprived of the role it played in the formation of policies (in accordance with our own efforts), it has become paralyzed. Its top leaders disappeared, just when it was becoming subject to aggressive, even life-threatening, attacks from the outside. Its personnel has decreased by more than 20 percent during 1989. Many well prepared and well trained colleagues are trading jobs, even though the preparation of decisions, campaigning activities, and the maintenance of contacts with people in social and political life continue to represent a serious burden.

2. Theoretical debates within the party during the past few months have revealed that:

- The differences in evaluating the events of 1956 do not represent unbridgeable gaps; most people are willing to accept more subtle judgements.
- The debates could not resolve the conflicts that exist between certain socialist values (such as social security or solidarity) and the demands inherent in economic stabilization. It has not been clarified, for example, how a partial transformation of property relations would relate to the social basis of renewal. (While the MSZMP is committed to remaining the primary representative of workers' interests, the immediate steps associated with the transformation of structure are likely to damage the interests of the party's traditional basis.)
- The debates frequently sidestepped the issues or provided simplified answers, relating the defense of socialism with standing up for a model that had clearly become untenable. On the other hand, many people take a similarly simplistic approach, ignoring economic and political realities when voicing the necessity of transformation or describing the feasibility of modern welfare capitalism.
- There are also tendencies which emphasize traits of a "people's party" or a "program party" and thus "deideologize" the MSZMP, even though without an

ideology, without pointing out the conflict between society's present and future interests, we could not complete the struggle inherent in transformation and modernization, and we could not maintain the sovereign image that distinguishes us from our opponents.

3. Our old image belongs to the past, while the new one has not yet been developed. The party's new political direction, role, and leaders have not had enough time to change the party's image. If the current tendencies continue unchanged, it is likely that the party's prestige, influence, operative abilities, and membership will continue to decline. The tension is not caused by the fact that there are debates within the party, or that there are various platforms and trends existing within the ranks, but by the fact that a number of these trends consider the exclusion of others to be their primary goal, and there are no signs of unity based on a sharing of platforms. The party is threatened with breakup, just when it has arrived at a historical point. The representatives of certain trends are using words like "resignation" and "expulsion" if the congress does not end according to their concepts.

The CC proposes a kind of renewal that is aimed at strengthening the elements committed to reform and unifying the forces interested in replacing our social model and undertaking comprehensive structural transformation. Our political activities cannot be self-serving; our endeavors must strive to solve the serious socioeconomic problems we are facing.

4. It is difficult to provide an accurate picture of the opposition's actual influence on our society or their level of organization. The recent auxiliary elections showed that the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) in particular enjoys considerable mass support, even though the outcome can in part be attributed to ballots cast to "punish" the MSZMP.

The opposition and alternative organizations and movements have been prompted, and to a certain degree compelled, to unify their forces through the negotiations to bring about a reconciliation. Thus, it is only recently that public opinion has been able to discern the deep distinctions separating such trends as populists, nationalists, and Christians, or among the bourgeois liberals, radicals, and alternative socialists.

The advances made by the opposition organizations, in fact, result from the pseudoliberalization of political activities that was introduced to improve the public mood suffering from the consequences of our economic crisis. Most of them emphasize the MSZMP's responsibility for past events and the present crisis, and make political capital out of national consciousness and universal moral principles. They successfully deemphasize the significance of our party's initiatives in changing our social model and ensuring a peaceful transition period, presenting them as nothing more than concessions forced on us by their actions.

The effectiveness of the opposition's strategy is bolstered by the fact that the influence of the MSZMP and the government in our national institutions of publicity has been significantly weakened. With the cooperation of some programmers at these institutions, the scope of opposition propaganda has been broadened. Even our mistakes in our past personnel policies now provide a backlash. Some of our own cadre are trying to hide their previous activities by outdoing the MSZMP's critics. At Hungarian Radio and Television the management's prestige has been further weakened by the fact that their personnel are not given consistent political support by the MSZMP leadership and the government, not even as much as would be suitable for "progovernment" organs under the definition of bourgeois democracies.

5. Due to the readiness of responsible political forces to make compromises, the trilateral conciliatory negotiations have succeeded in reaching agreements that promise political guarantees for a peaceful period of transition. At the same time some of the promises, made to promote a consensus, have become a source of tension in the relationship among the party, the government, and the National Assembly. The MSZMP, therefore, is making every effort to have the signed agreements promulgated as laws.

6. Due to the size of the national debt and the slowness of structural transformation, our indebtedness would grow even if our economy were to stagnate and our population's standard of living were to decline. In order to handle the debt crisis and accelerate structural transformation, we need a sizeable amount of external support, a moderation of restrictive foreign trade policies, a minimal degree of domestic sociopolitical consensus, and a strong MSZMP.

In 1989, thus far, we have observed favorable developments in the growth of market-oriented pressures, in the improvement of industrial effectiveness, and in export activities to capitalist countries. We can also be heartened by the fact that the liberalizing measures have not resulted in runaway inflation.

Due to the survival of the export compulsion, the broadening of political opportunities, and the monopolistic situation that still exists, the bargaining position of economic units has remained very strong. Since we must aggressively promote exporting efforts, we find it difficult to eliminate enterprises that are in the red; after all, they produce a significant amount of convertible currency. Moves by the authorities in this direction, combined with inflation, are creating an increasingly sharp conflict between the government and the trade unions that protect the interests of workers.

In contrast with 1988, present calculations indicate that the real wage level of the populace did not decline this year, however we see a continuing deterioration of the public mood. This is explained in part by a sociopsychological phenomenon, that of stagnation experienced by the masses. Another fact hidden by the averages is that

while there has been an acceleration in the decline of the urban middle classes, the situation of those who have the lowest income has not deteriorated any further. The lot of the middle strata becomes worse primarily if they are not able to earn extra income in the second economy, if their income is "visible," or if they have to care for several family members. And, since impoverishment is rampant among members of these strata and their communication abilities are greater than those of the poorest classes, their opinions are increasingly influential in shaping the public mood.

Neither society nor those who are affected by this appreciate the fact that we have managed to stop further deterioration in the lot of those with the smallest earnings. The MSZMP and the government are seriously burdened by the fact that the absence of sufficient material resources, infrastructural background, and political support makes it nearly impossible to handle the conflicts that accompany a genuine structural transformation.

A sizeable segment of society does not become involved in public life, in part because of the daily worries of making a living and in part because for decades they have been discouraged from such participation. The primary factors damaging the population's political disposition are the unfavorable developments in economic life, such as the high rate of inflation and the feeling that things will not improve in the foreseeable future.

7. The traditional party control over social and representative organizations has been eradicated, but it has not been replaced by a new partnerlike cooperation. In order to maintain their credibility and their independent image, and in order to retain members, the leaders of these organizations demonstrate a desire to break away from the party. They make it clear that their future political orientation depends on the MSZMP's actions: in fact, there is already considerable competition among the various parties for influence within the social organizations.

8. As a result of the conscious separation of party and state our government obtained actual independence. However, when it comes to the relationship of the MSZMP and the government, we can more acutely detect those separatist tendencies that are justified under the conditions of a single-party pluralism, even while we are making increasingly rapid progress toward a multi-party parliamentary system. By now, the contact between the leaders of the party and those of the government have become rather loose, and the government is becoming an increasingly independent center of power.

The elimination of the party-state has brought radical changes to the lives of those who work for governmental organs or the civil service; sensing their independence, the functionaries of these organizations are performing their work in a fully responsible manner. The MSZMP should take the new circumstances into consideration in striving to preserve its political influence and have its

policies accepted. A significant segment of the top and middle leadership consists of party members who are trying to adopt to the contradictory transitional situation. In its present state, however, the MSZMP's leadership does not offer sufficient support to make the increasingly frequent independent position statements reflect our political aspirations. Thus, there are signs of uncertainty in the state apparatus and in the armed services.

It is a well known fact that there are not sufficient resources to satisfy all social and cultural demands. The dissatisfaction born from the situation, the increasingly critical tenor of public opinion, and the demands put forth by the opposition parties call on the civil servants to make ever greater efforts. As of now, the MSZMP has been unable to make political capital out of these successes.

9. In international affairs, the MSZMP's activities during the past year have been characterized by a significantly greater decisiveness in defending the causes of socioeconomic renewal and the nation's interests. We have been aggressive in trying to take advantage of opportunities arising from the changes in the domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet Union and from the improvement of East-West contacts.

Our contacts with the Soviet Union and the other countries of the region are burdened by the fact that signs of a crisis are increasingly more perceptible in the nations of Eastern Europe. Due to the increasingly sharp differences in the varying courses of these countries' development, their political practices, or the pace of their transformation, our political relationships with some of these countries have become tense. As an additional burden, the deterioration of domestic problems has prevented any improvement of economic cooperation among these countries.

The Gorbachov leadership of the Soviet Communist Party has demonstrated understanding and confidence toward our policies, but even they are exhibiting anxiety and certain reservations about the course of transformations in Hungary's domestic situation.

Primarily as a result of differing practices in their domestic affairs, several East European nations are voicing increasingly sharp criticism of the Hungarian transformation. However, these nations cannot be called unified; there are major differences in their relationships with Hungary as well as in their ability to change. In the case of our relationship with Romania, the tensions were brought on by the national minority issue and the reevaluation of our past. The MSZMP, especially in its contact with the other country's party, failed to make all efforts to resolve the conflicts straining our countries' friendship and alliance. Until now, we have not been consistent enough in challenging attempts to arouse an antisocialist and anti-Soviet mood. Now we have made it clear that we disagree with statements made in the mass media that are injurious to our foreign policy interests.

Our opening endeavors are looked upon with sympathetic eyes in the developed capitalist countries, but their attitude reveals a degree of duplicity. Representatives of the governments worry about the possible destabilization of Hungary, which would affect the entire region. They keep reiterating the dangers of haste in the sphere of domestic policies, while international financial organizations pressure the government for measures that may have a politically destabilizing effect. The instability of our domestic life and the uncertainties of power relations limit the course of foreign policies and make it difficult to obtain the kind of political support that is necessary for consolidation.

III. Consequences To Be Observed in the Party's Reorganization

1. Following the May 1988 party conference, our party made a historical turn: The majority of party members accepted the fact that we must change our social model. Since then, our political public life has become more democratic.

2. Resulting from the substantive political debates within the party, the major elements of model change have become clear. The party declares as its basic aim a transformation to democratic socialism. On the one hand, it declares its opposition to the importing of a bourgeois system; on the other hand it is breaking with the remnants of dictatorial socialism, the idea of a bureaucratic party-state.

3. The party that is now being created sees its mission to be participation in political life primarily in the interest of those workers, peasants, and intellectuals who wish to get ahead on the basis of their performance. By accelerating structural transformations that would improve the quality of life, our party wishes to improve the lot of those who earn their living with their work. After all, the fate of the country rests on those individuals who do their duty at their place of work.

4. The MSZMP wishes to protect the interests of the cooperative movement. It looks at cooperatives not only as a way of sharing work and resources, but as a promising model of viable economic autonomy.

In broadening the entrepreneurial sector, the MSZMP expects an improvement of economic performance, the creation of new workplaces, and the easing of employment problems. Thus, it hopes to gain the entrepreneurs' support for its program. The party is convinced that the effective control of privately owned capital, through the use of lawful economic means, will prevent a sharpening of conflicts among the interests of various social strata.

5. When it comes to obtaining the support of young people, the people who represent the future, the MSZMP is most likely to succeed with its reform policies. We must consider our youth not only as an ally, but also as a political force that has its own role in leading the party.

6. The MSZMP strives to protect pensioners. It supports showing greater appreciation for the activities of those who, together with those still active in their jobs, have done so much for the country. Thus, our economic problems notwithstanding, the MSZMP wishes to protect the existential safety of pensioners and fight to ensure a decent life for them.

7. The MSZMP wishes to pay extraordinary attention to the status of women. One important goal is for the state to assume a greater share of caring for families through the development of health care and other services. Women should be able to choose, without financial disadvantages, whether they wish to find paying jobs or choose caring for children and the elderly as their work.

8. The MSZMP expects religious citizens to support its program. It invites into its ranks those who agree with the party's policies. It is confident that the cause of peaceful transformation will enable people of various convictions to work together.

9. Hungary should also represent its commitment to democratic constitutionalism by according full equality to its non-Hungarian speaking citizens. Our party strives to serve the cause of national renewal by ensuring political, legal, and cultural equality to the nationalities of this country.

10. In order to increase the party's attractiveness and mass basis, we are going to reshape the MSZMP's political face. We will succeed in the coming theoretical and political debates only if we attract many able and committed intellectuals to our ranks.

11. The MSZMP wishes to renew its partnership ties with the Patriotic Peoples Front (PPF), the trade unions, the cooperative movement, and the organizations of ethnic minorities. An important consideration for its members is their participation in the independent social organizations and movements.

* * *

The achievements of the Hungarian people during the past decade have been significant. The MSZMP turns to those who value and watch over the things we have accomplished, that is the goods we have obtained through hard work, and the security of our families and our children. The party serves the causes of social tranquility and national uplift. In today's Hungary, one cannot imagine a secure future without the MSZMP.

[Box, p 2]

The Agenda and the Rules of Order

The Order of Debate and Decisionmaking

Version A: Following the verbally presented amendment of points I, II, and III, the debate will continue in three phases. The task of the first phase will be to define the party's aims, characteristics (sections 1, 2, and 3 of the basic rules), central program theses, and operation. At the same time, a decision must be made concerning the party's name. At this time the basic rules concerning the

party's national leadership and functionaries must also be ratified (sections 21-24 of the basic rules). After this, national bodies and functionaries must be elected. During the second phase of the debate, the congress will discuss and ratify the party's program declaration and basic rules. During the third phase, the participants will declare their opinions concerning points of appeal and other timely political issues and initiatives.

Version B: Following the verbally presented amendment of points I, II, and III, the debate will continue in three phases. The task of the first phase will be to define the party's aims, characteristics, central program theses, and operation. At the same time, a decision must be made concerning the party's name. During the second phase of the debate, the congress will discuss and ratify the party's program declaration and basic rules. During the third phase, the participants will declare their opinions concerning timely political issues, initiatives, and points of appeal. The election of national bodies and functionaries will occur after the closing of these three phases.

Version C: The congress will discuss points I, II, and III of the agenda in one unified political debate. Subsequently, the participants will ratify the party's program statement and create the basic rules. After this, points IV and V will be debated and resolutions ratified. The congress will end with the election of national bodies and functionaries.

Version D: Following the verbally presented amendment of points I, II, and III, the debate will continue in three phases. The task of the first phase will be to define the party's aims, characteristics, central program theses, and operation. At the same time, a decision must be made concerning the party's name. During the second phase of the debate, the congress will discuss and ratify the party's program declaration and basic rules. Subsequently, the participants will elect the national bodies and functionaries. During the third phase, the congress will form its position concerning timely political issues, initiatives, and points of appeal.

The congress approved of version "D."

The Method of Nomination and Election

Version A: Each member of the National Presidium will be chosen by individual nomination and election.

Version B: The party president and functionaries will be chosen by individual nomination and election, while other members of the Presidium will be nominated on closed lists.

Version C: The party president will be chosen by individual nomination and election, while other functionaries and members of the Presidium will be nominated on closed lists.

The congress approved of version "C."

[Box, p 3]

The Functionaries of the Congress

Members of the Congress Presidium

a) Members of the party presidium: Rezso Nyers, Karoly Grosz, Miklos Nemeth, Imre Pozsgay.

b) Managing presidents: Zoltan Arpasy, T. Ivan Berend, Janos Gonci, Csaba Hamori, Gyula Horn, Peter Kiss, Laszlo Kovacs, Bela Mandik, Maria Ormos, Imre Szekeres, Laszlo Varga.

c) Leaders of the congress working committees: Imre Pozsgay, heading the committee editing the party program resolution; Gyorgy Fejti, heading the committee editing the party basic rules; Jenő Kovacs, heading the committee preparing issues of personnel; Laszlo Kovacs, heading the committee dealing with the rules of order; Pal Vastagh, heading the committee verifying the mandates; Kalman Gyuricska, heading the committee counting the votes; Sandor Balogh (invited guest with the right to participate in the discussion), heading the committee of appeals.

Invited to collaborate with the Presidium: Pal Ivanyi, head of the working committee in charge of organization and technical matters.

Spokesmen of the Presidium: Janos Barabas, Laszlo Major (invited guest with the right to participate in the discussion), and Imre Kovacs (invited guest with the right to participate in the discussion), the head of the committee dealing with the state of the party's property.

[Box, p 3]

From the Speech Made by Rezso Nyers

There is only one possible starting point for our political thinking: What do the Hungarian people want? What kind of aspirations are gathering in the common will that is now being formed?

Our people want the politicians and the economic experts to lead the country from its present state of economic uncertainty toward consolidation, marking time toward development, bringing improvements to their daily lives. By and large, they approve of or accept the full development of a market economy and the reform of property relations, but they have one spoken or unspoken condition. They insist that if profits grow, the workers want a share of them, and they do not want to take on more than a just proportion of the burdens brought on by fiscal stabilization.

There is one area in which it would be useless to invoke or search for popular will, because it does not exist and probably never will—on issues of ideology and world view. These cannot be homogenized either by social environment or scientific effort; they will remain matters for the individual to choose and decide.

As time passes, the historical role of the MSZMP is reaching its end.

What the Hungarian socialist movement needs now is a new type of party that is the successor, not just a political inheritor, of the MSZMP.

In my opinion, the new party cannot be a communist party. Not only because communism is irrelevant today, but also because the new party must provide a much broader social representation for the interests of workers.

Nor can the new party be a simple social democratic party; it cannot limit itself to everyday considerations of Realpolitik, but must aspire to long-range goals.

The new socialist party must find the as yet undeveloped synthesis that may arise as the traditions, values, and practices of social democrats and communists, who shared their socialist background before they were separated, reemerge.

[Box, p 4]

From the Speech Made by Karoly Grosz

Unity or schism; a renewed party or a new party? According to many people, this is the question before us. I agree, but in my opinion there is more at stake here. The main goal is democratic socialism which, in my mind, is the most obvious to benefit our nation. When it comes to this goal, even the party is a mere tool. The MSZMP is the most significant political force in today's Hungary. Without it, it would be impossible to accomplish the above goal.

It is natural in looking for a way out for us to become involved in debates about the process of transformation. There are less natural phenomena as well, such as the practice of labelling people, which has become widespread within the party. It would be a lesser problem if this only involved members of the leadership; after all, even outsiders have always had their one-word or single-sentence opinions concerning them. It is a more serious problem when the leaders start qualifying the membership, when they feel themselves qualified to determine who is a fundamentalist, who is a reformer, who can remain within the party, and who should be removed. There are even those who can state precisely how many members should leave the party. This is nothing more than the old Stalinist attitude and practice, even if it is coated with the apparently new colors of reform rhetoric.

It would be a historical mistake to accept the assertion according that the moderate and radical reformers of the party are irreconcilable. Yet, the great number of statements made during the past few days indicate that those who consider themselves radical reformers have already decided not to cooperate with us. They are making conscious efforts to erode the distinction between those who call for a more moderate pace of reforms and the

representatives of the extreme left wing. By doing this, they make the grave mistake of narrowing the reformers' social base.

In reporting to you on the 16 months of work performed by the Central Committee, I can state that the committee has made more epochal changes during the past year and a half than have occurred during the preceding decade and a half.

As our party is renewing itself, we must not permit our social commitment and our dedication to representing the workers to weaken. For a long time now, our party has been much more than the party of industrial workers. At the same time, it cannot turn its back on those workers, either openly or by hiding behind generalizations. This transformation should not be remembered as the one that thinned out the party's ties to the workers, but rather as the one that put forth a new, progressive expression for the special and mutually shared interests of workers and intellectuals.

In my view, the party should operate as a leftist democratic mass movement or alliance of movements, in which each member feels obligated to respect the central platform, the one ratified by the congress.

Rather than expelling those who think differently, it is the approximation of the differing points of view and the seeking of compromises that can form the basis of reform politics within this party. Conversely, the party can hardly be strengthened if those who will not accept political direction ratified by the congress are able to organize themselves into an independent force within the party.

In view of the approaching elections, the various trends within our party must reach a compromise and demonstrate unity before the public.

[Box, p 5]

The Make-Up of the Delegate Body

(Excerpted from the report of the committee in charge of examining the mandates)

	Persons	Percent
Number of elected delegates	1,279	100
Women	103	8.1
By age:		
Under 30	42	3.3
31-40	436	34.1
41-50	599	46.8
51-60	163	12.7
Over 61	39	3.1
By date of joining party:		
Prior to 1945	20	1.6
1946-56	52	4
1957-66	258	20.2

1967-70	262	20.4
1971-80	569	44.5
After 1980	118	9.3
Have postsecondary education	1,098	85.8
By occupation:		
Blue-collar worker	43	3.3
Supervisor	104	8.2
Intellectual	921	72
Other white-collar worker	118	9.3
Member of armed services	87	6.7
Private tradesman or merchant	6	0.5
Pensioner	60	4.7
Holds party post	1,061	83.1
Secretary of cell, high functionary, or member of Politburo	665	62.7
Elected unpaid functionary (party secretary at factory, office, or district level, etc.)	179	16.9
Elected paid functionary	204	19.2
Appointed party functionary	13	1.2
Never attended party congress or conference	1,117	87.5

[Box, p 6]

From the Comments Made by Jeno Kovacs

The Hungarian socialist movement, within the framework of the MSZMP, was the first to embark on the road leading to the creation of a party which is democratic not only in its social aspirations, but also in its internal relations. Members of an increasingly growing segment of the MSZMP's membership long ago made their own decision concerning the past, and have concluded that things cannot continue along the old routine.

The majority of these have already left this fortress, visualizing in their minds and their expectations the party of the future. They have no intention of turning back. They have no desire to redecorate and beautify this fortress, or to alter its location on the political scene by changing its name. What they wish to, and will, create is a party that is fundamentally different from its predecessor in substance, that is, in its principles, practical program, and method of operation; a party that is able to compete in the political arena of a constitutional state with a multiparty system, and that will revive the strength and prestige of the socialist movement.

The first and most elementary precondition for this is that every right be returned to the party membership.

A socialist movement that aspires to the community's respect does not need loud celebrations, does not need to deal with lots and dwellings, and does not need false populism. It rejects narrow-mindedness, pseudoculture, the arrogant use of power, and the purported benevolence of local bosses. And it does not need words which,

beyond mere words, are impossible to translate into most European languages; it does not need "leader selection," "replacement circle," "cadre selection" or "cadre management." It needs only one thing: election.

If possible, those who are leaving our company or are doubtful should be allowed to depart peacefully. Let us respect their convictions and let us proclaim that in the future we will be ready to cooperate with them in shared endeavors. We realize that these are painful decisions. However, they must be made, because even today, and certainly by tomorrow, only those political forces that agree on the central issues will have a chance and can influence people.

POLAND

Party Reform Dominates September PZPR Voivodship Plenums

Bydgoszcz: New First Secretary

90EP0034A Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU in Polish
15 Sep 89 p 3

[Article by Marek Badtke: "Bydgoszcz: The Road to Rebirth: Janusz Zemke Becomes First Secretary of Voivodship Committee"]

[Text] The party is regaining its balance in the Bydgoszcz region after June's electoral shock and a summer break that some of the members at last Thursday's plenum of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) called a costly vacuum.

The plenary meeting, in which Leszek Miller, Central Committee Secretary and member of the Politburo took part, afforded an occasion to discuss ways of breaking the barriers that continue to hamper the hastening that is so necessary today. The greatest resistance is in the minds of the party's base. People are internally fragmented, frustrated, often not adapted to the facts of a violently changing reality. After the Tenth Central Committee Plenum, it was as if our party were ahead of its time. "Let us now strive with all our strength to keep time from being ahead of us," asserted Ryszard Bandoszek, First Secretary of the City Committee of the PZPR in Bydgoszcz.

This pronouncement contained many specifics: evaluations and diagnoses brought over to the plenum directly from the basic party groupings in the 400,000-strong organization. An epoch in the political life of the country came to an end. The new times demand rapid transformation in the consciousness of the party's people, and this is the primary goal that the Bydgoszcz voivodship party organization's comrades set for themselves.

The new tendencies appearing in the life of the voivodship party organization, which is undergoing rebirth and

is the fourth largest in the country, were evident during the election of the new First Secretary of the Voivodship Committee of the PZPR. After the resignation of the incumbent, Zenon Zmudzinski, two candidates, recommended by the Executive Committee of the Voivodship Committee entered the race: Janusz Zemke, deputy director of the party affairs division of the PZPR Central Committee, a delegate from the Bydgoszcz voivodship who was born and raised there, and Ignacy Iwancz, Economic Secretary of the Voivodship Committee of the PZPR in Bydgoszcz. Both participated in dozens of meetings in various places to present their programs. "We are not fighting over arm chairs," the two declared, "we are blazing a trail for the values that will accelerate the rebirth of the party in the Bydgoszcz area."

One hundred seven votes were cast, and the winner was the younger Janusz Zemke, a 40-year-old doctor of political science, a skilled politician who already has rich experience in party affairs.

Torun: Z. Piatkowski as First Secretary

90EP0034B Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU in Polish
15 Sep 89 p 3

[Article by Marek Badtke: "Torun: Organizational Matters: Zenon Piatkowski Becomes First Secretary of the Voivodship Committee"]

[Text] The plenary meeting of the Torun Voivodship Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) began yesterday afternoon (14 September), and included as a participant Leszek Miller, Central Committee Secretary and member of the Politburo.

The main topic was to have been a discussion of the implementation of the resolutions of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Plenums of the PZPR Central Committee. However, the meetings were dominated by organizational matters surrounding the election of a First Secretary for the Voivodship Committee of the PZPR due to the resignation of Zenon Draminski from that post.

The candidates recommended by the Executive Committee—Andrzej Wietrzykowski, economic secretary of the Voivodship Committee of the PZPR, and Zenon Piatkowski, first secretary of the Torun City Committee of the PZPR—answered questions from Voivodship Committee members. The first ballot was inconclusive.

Eighty-seven members of the Voivodship Committee voted on the second ballot, casting 45 votes for Zenon Piatkowski. His opponent received 39 votes.

A discussion followed, the primary topic of which was ways of warding off the wait-and-see attitude and apathy evident in party life within the voivodship.

The second part of the PZPR Voivodship Committee plenum will be held shortly.

We shall return soon to the issues dealt with during the plenary Voivodship Committee meetings.

Ostroleka: New Program Necessary

90EP0034C Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU in Polish
16-17 Sep 89 p 3

[Article by Witold Sawicki: "What We Need Today Is Ordinary, Natural Conversation"]

[Text] "It is high time we stopped bemoaning our plight, rending our garments, and smearing the good name of the party. We have to talk back to ourselves once and for all: about how to put an end to the torpor, how to close ranks within the party, how to form the party's social structure." This is one of the characteristic opinions voiced on 15 September during the plenary meeting of the Voivodship Committee of the PZPR in Ostroleka, chaired by Jerzy Glowacki, first secretary of the Voivodship Committee.

It was agreed that in the present situation a new party program, one that addresses the problems and aspirations of the people, is certainly necessary.

"Who is one of us is a question that will not be answered by a membership card," said Jerzy Ponikiewski, secretary of the Voivodship Committee.

Teresa Kosiorek, a schoolteacher from Lubiejewo, stressed that "the most important thing for today is that we be in a new situation, in a democracy, not a dictatorship."

Jerzy Karp, first secretary of the Community Committee in Szelkow, campaigned for a party that must nowadays be a compact organism, with structures organized according to program and goals.

During the discussion, Politburo member Leszek Miller, who was participating in the plenum, shared his reflections. Among other things, he said: "This party debate was a conversation. An ordinary, natural conversation, the kind we need nowadays."

The Central Committee Secretary also made reference to the new government's program.

"This program," he asserted, "is in many respects analogous to the program of the M. Rakowski government. This proves that there is no alternative to the program that we, as a party, have written. The fundamental difference lies in the area of society's support."

The plenum made changes, designed to economize time and space, in the structure of the Voivodship Committee.

Among the organizational matters, the resignation of Michal Langiewicz from his post as executive committee member and Voivodship Committee secretary was accepted. The plenum convened a voivodship congress commission.

Opole: Congress Preparations Discussed

90EP0034D Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU in Polish
18 Sep 89 p 3

[Article by Ryszard Augustyn: "Can You Consult a Revolution?"]

[Text] An important novelty at the meeting was a survey conducted during the course of the plenum concerning preparations for the congress. It revealed fairly uniform views. More than 80 percent of the members of the Voivodship Committee answered in favor of holding a legislative/electoral campaign after the Eleventh Congress, which would advance the deadline; in favor of direct election of delegates to the congress; in favor of assigning the candidates active and passive voting rights; in favor of inviting representatives of extraparty currents in the Polish left to participate in preparations for the Congress; and in favor of reforming the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) into a new party with a new program, bylaws, and name.

Despite this uniformity, discussion showed that neither is there any lack of disputed questions, that the state of the party varies in different individual milieux.

"Members of the Basic Party Organizations have a decided antipathy toward party activities in their present form," asserted Stefan Ziola, first secretary of the Kedzierzyn-Kozle City Committee, comparing the results of conversations with Basic Party Organization secretaries. Radicalism in expectations is universal, while divergences in opinion appear only when details are at issue.

The remaining participants in the discussion were also armed, if not with survey results, then at least with numerous conversations with active members. Andrzej Namyslo, discussing the written opinions of the Opole Basic Party Organizations, asserted, among other things, that there is a clear disinclination to discuss things with the party apparatus, a distrust of and disorientation about what is happening within the party. Consequently, one can doubt whether a "grassroots" congress by means of universal consultation, can successfully be done. For can you consult a revolution? Let a panel of experts prepare a program; the people will either accept it or they will not. At any rate, the party must move quickly. The congress needs to be held this year; otherwise, decentralizing tendencies could blow us apart.

Slupsk: Calls for Change Ignored

90EP0034E Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU in Polish
19 Sep 89 p 2

[Article by Jan Urbanowicz: "It Is Hard To Break Away From the Past"]

[Text] The Executive Committee of the Voivodship Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) in Slupsk had high hopes when it made a decision to call a plenary meeting of the voivodship board at which a decision was to be made concerning what the Slupsk organization should do before the Eleventh Congress.

The plenum was preceded by many laborious preparations. Meetings were held with all of the secretaries of the Central Committee, Basic Party Organizations [POP], and the Community Party Organizations [OOP], and a survey of the party's active membership was conducted to answer four essential questions: what should the party be like, what should its program be, what bylaws should it have, and what should be the system for electing delegates to the Eleventh Congress.

The meeting, which was chaired by Ryszard Kurylczyk, first secretary of the Voivodship Committee of the PZPR, unfortunately did not yield answers to these questions. Once again it turned out that the party's active membership found it very difficult to break away from recollections about the upset in the Sejm and Senate elections, or from looking for those at fault.

The expectation of a decision from the top down, on which the "top" insisted for years, was manifested in statements by members of the Voivodship Committee, Voivodship People's Council members invited to the meetings, PZPR members, and guests alike.

The discussion did not pick up the thread of a statement Antoni Madej, a farmer from Debrzno and a member of the Voivodship Executive Committee, who called primarily for a party political program for today and tomorrow, warning that without such a program the party will weaken and fall apart.

And too bad they did not, because comrades in the Basic Party Organizations, Local Committees, and even Community Committees are also calling for the formulation of a set of political principles for the PZPR. Principles for which the party intends to fight, from which it does not wish to retreat.

Taking the floor during the discussion, Marian Stepien, a PZPR Central Committee secretary who took part in the Slupsk meeting, urged people to "cast off their black robes of mourning" and to look at the changes in progress as belonging to all Poles.

In the "Statement" accepted at the conclusion of the meeting, the Voivodship Committee declared itself in favor of convening the Eleventh Congress quickly and instructed its Executive Committee to form a voivodship congress committee.

Additional Commentary on PZPR Voivodship Plenary Activity*90EP00374 Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU in Polish
16-17 Sep 89 pp 1, 3*

[Article by Marek Badtke: "Time Will Not Get Ahead of the Party"]

[Text] "An arousal from lethargy came late," say comrades at plenary meetings of voivodship committee meetings in Bydgoszcz and Torun on 14 September.

But better late than never. Anyway, it is hard, in the Pomorze and Kujawy regions, to talk about "decomposition" of the party, viewed with such glee by certain wretched "connoisseurs." In Inowroclaw, the party has not surrendered the initiative, even for a moment. The largest organization in the voivodship, the Bydgoszcz city organization, is gathering its strength. Torun, known for the initiatives of its party intellectuals, has been experiencing a controversy drawn along the lines of the PZPR University Committee versus the leadership of the voivodship organization. Through the clash of opinions and judgements, one can average out the views on the matter most important to the entire party today: the date for the congress and its form, the program and place of the PZPR in the new political realities, the role of the party apparatus...

The progress of the elections mirrors the changes appearing in the party's working style. The field of candidates was carefully consulted. I heard at the Bydgoszcz plenum that due to the frustration of the base membership, all the hope was being placed in having leaders capable of rousing the organization, of giving impetus to political work in that milieu.

The questions were fairly pointed in Bydgoszcz. Besides the worthy questions about their program of activity, their organizational ideas, their personal views about the date and form of the Congress and about the shape of the bylaws, the questions were also raised around the material status of both candidates. There was no lack of enthusiasm for a "witch burning." This type of occurrence met with decided disapproval from the majority of Voivodship Committee members. In Torun, they concentrated on issues of program and organization, and on the ideological sphere.

It was characteristic that in both places, the younger candidates won. Both presented complex programs that took both the need for organization transformation and essential changes in program into consideration. Thus Janusz Zemke declared himself in favor of rejecting cosmetic changes in favor of fundamental reforms. He sees the need for another approach to party activity where people reside, postulates dropping the training, which is very often fictitious, and replacing it with an intraparty information system.

In Torun, I extracted three criteria of prime importance from a manifesto by Zenon Piatkowski that was, unfortunately, somewhat long-winded: the person, democracy, and justice.

The two new leaders—the 40-year-old from Bydgoszcz and the man from Torun, who is one year younger—have different characters. Zemke is already a seasoned politician: he will be able to pick the most capable people to implement the party's goals. His counterpart in Torun, who is less effective, showed that the party can serve people even in its most trying times. The initiatives of the City Committee of the PZPR, where Z. Piatkowski had hitherto been First Secretary, led to a children's hospital being built within two years, and to a streetcar line connecting the residential quarters and the downtown area being put into operation within a short time. This seemingly reticent man was also able to come to terms with the influential and opinion-shaping party organization at the university. The party at Mikolaj Kopernik University did not throw down their guns. On the contrary: they redoubled their efforts to rehabilitate activists and to revive, within the city, the political movement that Torun calls "horizontal structures."

A common feature of the new First Secretaries of the Voivodship Committees in Bydgoszcz and Torun is their mental ruggedness. J. Zemke, who appears to vacillate internally, is a politician with the mind of a chess player. Z. Piatkowski's pertinacity and consistency are reminiscent of a steamroller of the most modern design.

Both are responsive to arguments and willing to dialogue. In presenting the role and place of the party in their regions, they are clear proponents of dialogue with all forces that recognize a superordinate criterion: the good of Poland and of its people. Ideological opposition does not mean enmity. But mutual competition to accelerate change for the better, say both, is an exigency of the time.

In Torun, a wait-and-see attitude is evident instead of the expected quarrels over principles. The emotional electoral campaign, which went to two ballots, was unable to alter that impression. In Bydgoszcz one can already see the beginning of a political movement whose objective is to bring the party back into balance. The old-timers, Alfons Brykowski from Naklo and Bernard Rybczynski from Nowawies Wielka, and the young ones, Janusz Kuczma from Cekcyn and Marek Kozubski from Bydgoszcz, speak with equal passion and a common concern for the future of the Polish left.

If the old guard make an appeal to keep faith with ideological principles, the representatives of the modern generation concentrate on issues intended to modernize the style, forms, and methods of party activity.

The party was ahead of its time at the Tenth Plenum: let us do everything to keep time from getting ahead of the party. J. Kuczma calls for greater autonomy for the basic organizations. The new program of the Polish left must come from below. Delegates to the congress and the

central authorities alike must be elected directly by members of the PZPR within their organizations in proportion to the size of those groups. Ryszard Bandoszek of Bydgoszcz argued that the ideas and experience that will guarantee progress will be born of the reflections of the "base."

But it is precisely the "lower levels" of the party that feel isolated, left to their own devices, cut off from information about the most important motives for decisions made by the party leadership. It is hard to be surprised that the party's base today is unprepared to react to the changes appearing in political life if there had not been a single member of the PZPR leadership in the fourth largest voivodship party organization in the country for many months.

Politburo member and Central Committee Secretary Leszek Miller heard Ryszard Bandoszek's statement. He had occasion to react quickly to suggestions from members of the Voivodship Committee. First, since it turns out that he will be in constant contact with the Bydgoszcz organization on behalf of the PZPR leadership, and second, since he characterizes the strategy and tactics of the party leadership in the face of new political realities.

"The Central Committee," said L. Miller, "has acknowledged that it should join the Mazowiecki government to negotiate conditions. The interests of Poland are the superordinate criterion. The benefit to the party will only come in the long term."

The true force of the PZPR depends on the support society gives it. The intellectual potential of milieux that foster the left remains huge, if not fully utilized.

The party's position is the sum of the values we are able to work out along the way to the rebirth of society's authority and the credibility of our aspirations or goals. There are too many forces in the party today that consider themselves to hold a monopoly on being right.

Among the challenges that should also keep pace with the expectations of the party's base is the call to solidarity within the party. We understand this to mean turning toward a person, a comrade in the same organization, who thinks in the same ideological categories, and who is burdened by the same everyday worries.

'Opposition' Dilemma: Worker Protection During Restructuring Needed

90EP0024A Warsaw KONFRONTACJE in Polish
No 7/8, Jul-Aug 89 pp 8-9

[Interview with Senator Zbigniew Romaszewski, Citizens Parliamentary Club, by Jerzy Szczesny; date and place not given]

[Text] [KONFRONTACJE] How does the formerly persecuted and jailed opposition leader feel now being a senator?

[Romaszewski] It feels strange. Probably it is with surprise that those who the other day persecuted him now see him in this position. It is also strange because I was not a supporter of the idea of broad participation by the opposition with the legislative authorities of the current system.

[KONFRONTACJE] As far as the scope of this participation is concerned, was it determined by the public?

[Romaszewski] This is not so obvious. I believe that it is difficult to answer this question precisely as to the degree to which the public declared itself in favor of Solidarity in the elections and to what degree they were opposed to communism. In my opinion it is more likely the latter.

[KONFRONTACJE] And do you view this as negative?

[Romaszewski] Oh heavens no. But this serves as an indicator for the opposition since leading the public without an explicit and clearcut program is both impossible and risky.

[KONFRONTACJE] Therefore, it is a matter of leadership?

[Romaszewski] Of course not. It concerns overcoming public apathy, convincing people to take care of their own problems, and the rebirth of a broad social movement, but one which will not lead to a massive explosion. We remember that last year's May and August strikes were not a result of the opposition's political ideas, but rather a unanimous expression of mass aspirations.

Hopefully, the government carefully considered the reality of these strikes since they treated them as an alarm signal, setting into motion the long predicted political reform ideas, which would be presented to the public in a comprehensive manner. These ideas would also represent the answer to the everyday delays faced by the nation.

[KONFRONTACJE] Was this lack of ideas not due to the rapid passage of history?

[Romaszewski] Yes also, but it resulted chiefly from the opportunity for a proper description of the social situation using the model of strongly polarized conflict: the people versus the communists; the opposition versus the government, Walesa versus Jaruzelski, democrats versus totalitarians, Solidarity versus PZPR, good versus bad.

[KONFRONTACJE] The election results confirmed the presence of this model in the minds of the public.

[Romaszewski] Yes. But new conflicts are beginning to compete with the old ones, which basically are changing and in the future will definitely continue to change even more the face of Polish society and problems. The young versus the elderly, the poor versus the rich, radicals versus moderates, left-wing versus right-wing, whatever would today in the Polish conditions indicate that finally the politically active elites and the rest of society all represent problems which can very quickly come to

dominate the existing framework. Broad public opinion is attached to this framework. Which, after all, was obvious in the Sejm and Senate elections.

[KONFRONTACJE] Therefore, we are faced with the possibility of the creation of a new political geography for the nation?

[Romaszewski] No this is impossible considering the existing fact. I already anticipated this last year. Today, I can only repeat this. Together with the disappearance of the conflicts between Solidarity and the party, those of course, which can be eliminated, conflicts have arisen within individual camps. Currently, we have four specific political groups, not two. There is opposition within the opposition, there are two coalition groups for Walesa and Jaruzelski. There is also a clear opposition party which has swallowed its pride, or the so-called concrete [beton].

[KONFRONTACJE] The authority of Lech Walesa and Wojciech Jaruzelski will not be challenged by an intelligent person?

[Romaszewski] There is, however, a certain group within the opposition and in the party which does this, and thus the problem. In my opinion in that part of the opposition which I have named the coalition, there exists for now for quite a while contempt for groupings remaining in the opposition concerning the Roundtable Agreement. The current situation continues to be marked by great support for Lech Walesa's ideas which are both from the opposition as well as for the masses. Tomorrow, however, the situation may change, since the economic crisis will radicalize the attitudes and view. It can happen that the role of the nonparliamentarian opposition, or the so-called unconstructive one will then increase significantly. This will be synonymous with the weakening of the social base of the Roundtable. Therefore, the opposition is faced with the need to be especially sensitive to public opinion. In the opportunities described for future dialogue with the government, the parliamentary opposition should protect its opposition identity and this can only be guaranteed through the development of a broad public movement created entirely under democratic formulas.

[KONFRONTACJE] Do you not believe that the initiated process of understanding is politically attractive to the public?

[Romaszewski] This process will be attractive when (and if) the emerging opposition leadership is able to gather a broad social base around itself. I am afraid, I am very apprehensive about the consequences of the situation in which the opposition is beginning to become divided over its "constructiveness" rather than becoming united. The authorities whose interventions have led to such opposition organizations as the KPN [Confederation for an Independent Poland], Militant Solidarity, PPS-RD [Polish Socialist Party], or the National Commission Task Force to become unconstructive, may have to pay a high price for causing this to happen.

[KONFRONTACJE] What for example?

[Romaszewski] This is obvious. If the opposition leadership does not obtain widespread public support, the current period of understanding can end in fiasco.

[KONFRONTACJE] It is not likely to result in a jointly negotiated reform?

[Romaszewski] When we finally begin to work together on reforming the economy, within the framework of the anticrisis pact, it will be necessary to respond seriously to two questions: where will we get the money for this? and what will happen to the public during this period of reform? Insofar as the opposition is concerned, we not only do not have the answers to these questions but we do not even ask them. This is a rather astonishing fact for an organization which originated out of the union movement.

[KONFRONTACJE] Maybe it is necessary to put part of the opposition on the government side of the camp.

[Romaszewski] This would be a veritably suicidal idea for all sides in the Polish drama, especially the economy. Please take into consideration that the momentary and not very big postelection enthusiasm will not be able to reverse the anger over the deepening sense of frustration by the people. This anger would be less controlled and all the more dangerous because the people would start fighting over the adequate conditions surrounding their existence and their constantly regulated laws, stripped of their elite and authority. A new generation has grown up. Impatience is growing from month to month. Public radicalism is increasing.

[KONFRONTACJE] Is it obvious to the authorities and to the opposition elites what public feeling they have to mirror?

[Romaszewski] I agree that they have to. But can they, since currently the most active portion of student and working youth is not represented in the leadership bodies of Solidarity.

[KONFRONTACJE] And why are they not represented?

[Romaszewski] Because martial law blocked the democratic mechanisms within the union. That is why at the roundtable there was a crowd on the government side and not on the opposition side.

[KONFRONTACJE] The initiation of these democratic mechanisms within the opposition which allows the creation of a representative group is only a question of time. On the way, however, there is the problem of reform, for which there is neither money nor ideas: what should be done with those who will not benefit from the reform?

[Romaszewski] I once wrote that if reform is to be real, then people cannot only lose on it and bear all its costs. Today, I continue to support this belief to the full extent.

[KONFRONTACJE] As a motto, this is a wonderful statement. But how can this be achieved?

[Romaszewski] In this manner. It is only necessary to decide on something. The opposition does not want the government and this is justified. At the same time, however, the Solidarity trade union should rid itself of the temptation for creating something which is responsible for everything, directs everything, is the one representative of the people, cares about the economy, and provides the workers with protection, etc. The lesson of the "leading power of the nation" we have already been reshaping for a good 40 years and what has come of it—everyone sees. The union if it is to be a credible institution for the public must, above all, represent the interests of the workers. It can contain compromises, taking economic necessities into consideration but it can never simultaneously represent both the employee and the employer, regardless of whether it is the government or a company. The union should serve as a damper for social change during the reform process; it must influence its pace and size; it must negotiate in the name of the workers reform conditions, but it cannot accept responsibility for it.

[KONFRONTACJE] At the time, when the government believed that inflation was better than Solidarity, it was essentially absurd. But today the government has perhaps come to the conclusion that Solidarity is preferable to inflation.

[Romaszewski] Even if this is so, the protection of the workers during reform implementation still remains the main problem for the union.

[KONFRONTACJE] Do you have any ideas on how to resolve it?

[Romaszewski] Above all, Solidarity should prepare a plan and negotiate with the government on a law protecting the workers during the implementation of economic reform. In this case, the government has sufficient experience from those times when it was dissolving former ministries and unions. The Council of Ministers resolution was passed at the time, on the basis of which laid-off workers received compensation, scholarships, early retirement, or financial assistance for starting a private business. This is the correct course to follow and it should be retained throughout the closing and reorganization of enterprises.

[KONFRONTACJE] But will the economy be able to afford this?

[Romaszewski] Here, let us touch upon the union's finances. For a long time the union was discreet, which in turn worked against it since the government was able to use this as the argument that the union was being funded by the CIA. This was said during the most intense moments of the social crisis. During the thaw, it was noted, however, that the union is being funded by its current inspiration. We ourselves are to blame for this. Solidarity's concerns up until now have revolved around

projects, ideas, discussions, and as a matter of fact it still does not know the value of money as a condition for political activity. It is a real socialist relic. After all, every normal Western politician knows that political activity needs funding, and serious activity requires large amounts. Someone who does not understand this should be suspect as to whether he is capable of doing anything or whether he is a fraud. Therefore, we must finally mention that the union needs money and we will try to increase the funds under union management specifically for the protection of Polish society.

[KONFRONTACJE] Would Solidarity be willing to finance the costs of reform?

[Romaszewski] My proposal is as follows: let us create a legal Foundation for the Protection of Workers During Reform Implementation and try to collect the necessary funds for this purpose. The union should not only not stop accepting foreign gifts but it must actually request them for the well-being of all, even the West which, after all, is interested in social tranquility in Poland.

[KONFRONTACJE] Nevertheless, would there be large amounts?

[Romaszewski] About two hundred to three hundred million dollars for this foundation would allow it to significantly offset the results of an authentic economic reform. This amount, if it were well managed, could assist greatly in the process and pace of reform. Since, on the one hand the foundation would be evaluated by the individual situation of the enterprises slated for closing, as well as, provide financial assistance in the requalification of workers and assist workers' groups in undertaking individual or group economic initiatives.

[KONFRONTACJE] Will the government, however, be able to accept the political concept of the foundation? The experience with the Agricultural Foundation does not fill one with optimism?

[Romaszewski] The rejection of the foundation by the government insofar as it would be supported by the entire union has not occurred up to now. It would be very obvious proof of the government's preservation of its ideological preference over the one which it has proclaimed for years concerning the need for economic reform. I believe, however, that the more discerning government officials would see the evident self-interests of the country in the foundation idea proposed by me. Seeing the foundation's socioeconomic values would only authenticate the government in the eyes of the West and prompt it to also take the foundation's needs into consideration.

[KONFRONTACJE] Can the union realistically expect to obtain such enormous amounts?

[Romaszewski] Three hundred million dollars does not even represent one-half of the cost of a strategic bomber, yet the political and economic results of this initiative are obvious. This would result in the stabilization of that

portion of Eastern Europe located between the Bug and Oder Rivers. A stabilization resulting from a successful democratization process of political life, as well as, a result of the liberalization of the economy bringing about an increase in the public's autonomy. This represents a better guarantee of security in this part of the world than an entire squadron of strategic bombers, regardless of the markings on the wings. This is probably of interest mainly to Poles, Russians, Europe, and finally to the entire world.

Minister Kuron Addresses Issue of Individual 'Welfare' Aid

90EP0043-A Warsaw *TYGODNIK SOLIDARNOSC* in Polish No 16, 15 Sep 89 p 1

[Interview with Jacek Kuron, Minister of Labor and Social Policy, by S.D.; place and date not given]

[Text] [TYGODNIK SOLIDARNOSC] You are assuming a very difficult ministry. Aren't you afraid you'll find yourself in an awkward situation sometimes with the workers?

[Kuron] There was a time in Poland, and it lasted 42 years, when the order depended on the complete coercion of the working people. Now the situation has changed. After the totalitarian order collapsed, the pressure to increase wages has become overpowering and the counterforces are very weak. I think that the people's patience is worn out and that the situation in Poland should be changed immediately. We're all interested in this. To achieve this, we must bear some expenses; there is no other remedy. All or nearly all of the people must bear them. The duty of the state is to defend only those, who are not in a position to defend themselves.

[TYGODNIK SOLIDARNOSC] And do you have some concrete ideas on how to protect them?

[Kuron] Oh yes! If it's a matter of pensioners and retirees, we must introduce a system of more rapid monthly revalorization of rents and pensions in relation to average wages, so that pensions do not lag behind them. I think that we should introduce a point system, proven, for example, in regard to the civil servants during the great inflation of the years between wars. Group dismissals from work is a second matter. We must protect the means of livelihood of the dismissed people and enable them to find new work as quickly as possible.

[TYGODNIK SOLIDARNOSC] And will money be found for these goals?

[Kuron] This is what the entire problem is based on. From whom to take, and to whom to give? And if we do not help the retirees and those dismissed from work, then we cannot perform the whole operation. A third matter, for me extremely important: the extreme poverty suffered by many large families, mothers raising children alone, the handicapped, and others. It concerns a large

welfare operation with the participation of social movements and organizations, integrated and coordinated by the government. The fact of the matter is that the aid be addressed individually, because it is wasted otherwise. I maintain that there are funds and means for this, which haven't been used before, because there is no efficient apparatus for their distribution. And it's still possible to mobilize considerable reserves. All of us must bear the expenses of curing the economy, but no one may starve.

[TYGODNIK SOLIDARNOSC] But what will happen if, for example, the government, which you represent, announces a moratorium on strikes, and you hear from the workers: Pan Jacek, are you now against us?

[Kuron] Generally, I am against a strike moratorium. I think that it is necessary to agree with respect to wage principles, that means with respect to the expenses we must bear. We must also immediately amend the fifth section of the law for professional unions that concerns the right to strike, in order to simplify the procedure for organizing strikes. The procedure, which has been binding up to now, practically precludes strikes, which causes all strikes to be wild. The fact of the matter is that professional unions should have strike protection at their disposal only in a situation where the government breaks an agreement made by itself with the professional unions. As long as the government doesn't break the agreement, the professional unions cannot use this protection. Obviously, there will be wild strikes. But there must be agreement: with the strikers "all wild" no one will talk. And what's more, it's not allowed to retreat then.

[TYGODNIK SOLIDARNOSC] And just then you will hear the words: "Pan Jacek..."

[Kuron] Certainly, I will hear them many times. Besides, I have already heard them many times. There are people who take the simplest attitude. They ceaselessly say: Give me! I always quarrel with them and I always hear from them that I have turned traitor. But I don't think that's true. I know that moral conflicts are awaiting me. No one has conceived a method in life without conflicts. But I don't have the feeling that the number of conflicts I have lived through in recent days has increased.

SD, Smallest Government Coalition Partner, Profiled

90EP0014A Rotterdam NRC *HANDELSBLAD* in Dutch 14 Sep 89 p 12

[Article by Peter Michielsen: "We Are Closer to Solidarity Than the Others"]

[Text] Warsaw—"The little bit of confidence which exists in the community does not apply to this new government coalition, but to the opposition which plays the main role in it."

Alicja Szajna, member of the Central Committee of the SD [Democratic Party], the smallest of the coalition

partners in the new Polish government, drew only faint applause for that remark during the Plenum of the Central Committee. And her remark was still one of the most significant that was made during the Plenum.

For Alicja Szajna knows where the SD stands better than many others in it: on the verge of nothing. The SD is a small party of 120,000 members. It represents especially tradesmen, private businessmen and intellectuals, politically powerless groups. The SD does not represent any worker or peasant groups, it will never be able to make its presence felt. And that small party has cooperated honestly and faithfully with the communists for 40 years. With the ZSL [Peasant Party], the SD was an insignificant satellite, an alibi party whose existence and operation only had one purpose: to maintain the fiction that Poland was democratic and pluralistic and that it had a multiparty system.

All those 40 years the SD had nothing to contribute to Polish politics, it had, at the most, some party bosses, a few deputy prime ministers and some ministers. One of such ministers, a certain former SD leader, Kowalczyk, is still well remembered in Warsaw. After the declaration of the state of siege, that man was one of the main supervisors of monitoring and cutting off the telephones of thousands of Solidarity members.

The SD has not meant so much in Polish politics and Alicja Szajna was very right when she also questioned that and the lack of confidence in the SD itself. She certainly deserved somewhat better applause in that Central Committee.

Jerzy Jozwiak is the SD chairman. He still will have none of the previous satellite status of his Democratic Party. Jozwiak says in his office in the party's headquarters that the identification of the SD as an obedient partner of the PZPR [Polish United Worker's Party], the communist party, is a simplification. But he admits it is an explainable simplification. "Our principles were never known in the West. Therefore consider this. In 1981 and 1988 we expressed ourselves at the 12th and 14th congresses in favor of full political and economic liberalization," says Jozwiak and he forgets the 13th Congress, for then the SD must also again keep quiet, that was in 1985. "It is true," Jozwiak continues, "that the PZPR always ignored our platform, for politics was its monopoly and we were too weak to assert ourselves."

Rebellious

The change came in stages, for the SD was not able to end its checkered past all at once. In March, the rank and file rebelled and 90 percent of the Central Committee was dismissed. In July, the revolt spread to the new leadership: one still entered the election together with the communists, the SD had won 27 seats in the Sejm of the 460, 27 "restricted" seats, seats which were not contested with Solidarity, little gifts of the communists. But when Czeslaw Kiszczak was appointed prime minister, the party leadership strutted around. Kiszczak was certainly chosen under pressure of the communists, but

the satellite status was over. And when Lech Walesa offered his hand to the SD and the ZSL in August and proposed a coalition, the SD jumped quickly on the bandwagon. It saw its chance then to escape definitely from the permanent affectionate embrace of the PZPR.

The SD activists told the rank and file if the party had not done that, it would have gone under ingloriously. The communists had a crushing loss in the elections, in the next elections they would not be able to guarantee the SD a single extra seat in the Parliament and in the district system which Poland has, small parties, simply have no chance. The rank and file rebelled and the party cells demanded the transfer to Solidarity in August. Jozwiak clearly admits that the party would have broken up into two sections. "We were right not to let this chance get away."

But, he says, it did not involve only the pressure of the rank and file, it also involved our political will: "All the previous year, at the 14th Congress, we had denounced the alliances with the PZPR and we repeated that after the Round Table Agreement and after the elections." Jozwiak says that it involves there not only that we were released by the PZPR's election result, we also had something like that as our platform. According to Jozwiak, the will to put that platform in practice was crucial. "We have always been good in outlining a platform, but poor in carrying it out. I also admit that it is important that we enter the coming election as an equal partner of the other parties."

Jerzy Jozwiak likes to dramatize the past somewhat, he likes to proclaim new truths out of the old: "We always opposed the right of a single party to play a leading role in the state and we were always against the stipulation about the leading role of the communists. Elections must decide who governs the country." And Jerzy Jozwiak says do not forget that our platform is much closer to that of Solidarity than that of the other parties and he also forgets that Solidarity does not have a platform at all.

Getting the Worst of It

All that does not alter the fact that the SD is the smallest party in the new coalition with Solidarity and can only play a minor role immediately. Not for nothing did the party get the worst of it in the discussion about the composition of the new government which was accompanied by much bickering. The SD had demanded three or four ministers and a deputy prime minister. It obtained two ministers and a deputy prime minister and what is more, the "typical" SD ministries—justice, health, and environment—were lost. Does Jozwiak realize that Solidarity can have used—misused—the SD to break the communists' monopoly and now perhaps is it going to treat the SD just as badly as the communists have done for 40 years?

Jozwiak: "We want to preserve our independent position, we must be able to express our identity. Those ministries—alas, you must not only see that numerically,

you must also consider the intellectual potential. There are always clashing interests in the formation of a coalition."

Nevertheless, would the SD still not have liked to get the Ministry of Justice? The former justice minister, Balcer, a SD member, was even respected by the opposition.

Jozwiak: "Everyone now regards the matter from the standpoint of that Ministry of Justice. But we must not consider balance in the government, we must seek quality." No, Jerzy Jozwiak is quite satisfied, quantitatively certain, as regards substance perhaps a little less. How much less on a scale of 1 to 10? "I would say: two-thirds, a seventy. But it is difficult to measure satisfaction on a Beaufort scale," says Jerzy Jozwiak.

A day later in the same party headquarters where the Central Committee gave Alicja Szajna her meager applause, Josef Musiol, SD deputy chairman, announces that the report of a special committee about the mistakes which the party made in the past is still not being made public. In that report the SD puts on its hair shirt, reports how low it bowed to the communists after the state of emergency was declared in December 1981, how many journalists were discharged on the two newspapers and other SD publications, under pressure of the communists, declares how many local branches were then eliminated, how many local SD leaders were dismissed, how many SD members of Parliament were suspended and even expelled from the party. The report is the catalogue of the former satellite status of the SD.

After the Central Committee meeting, we rushed up to Josef Musiol to get the report from him. But he says he would rather keep it in his inside pocket: "There are too many mistakes in it, there are things in it which never have happened, we would only discredit ourselves." In the Central Committee restaurant, he sits down for the regular meal: vermicelli soup and a small plate with a little meat, mashed potatoes and a few carrots. For the SD is only a small party.

Radical Reform in Polish Academy of Sciences Called For

90EP0043B Warsaw TYGODNIK SOLIDARNOSC in Polish No 17, 22 Sep 89 p 3

[Article by Andrzej Rychard, Barbara Skarga, and Edmund Wnuk-Lipinski: "What To Do With the Academy?"]

[Text] Efforts to reform the Polish Academy of Sciences [PAN] have been made many times already. The goal of these efforts was to break the bureaucratic web hampering creative scientific work. Unfortunately, these actions did not bring results. Not without reason, the conviction is becoming increasingly more plausible that it is easier to reform the Polish State than the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Evil is inherent in the very essence of PAN, being an outgrowth of the Stalinist system, in which science became one of the "departments" of the monoparty state, and the role of scientist was reduced to the function of a state bureaucrat. As experience teaches, this principle, lying at the roots of PAN, cannot be changed; however, it must be endured.

Several scientists submitted a new plan for the general reform of scientific policy in Poland to those conferring at the roundtable. There was also a section devoted to the Academy, in which it is proposed to transform it into the Scientific Research Center, operating under the auspices of the Council of Scientific Agencies, which is dependent only on the Sejm and was created by way of election. In general, this plan was not taken into consideration, although certain of its threads are still current. Other plans elaborated currently by the commission of the PAN Presidium introduce only slight touch-ups to the existing status quo and, therefore, have the greatest chance for realization.

We propose to go farther, by a more radical route, retaining several ideas included in the plan for the Scientific Research Center. We think that a university should be created on the base of the Academy's intellectual potential. We will call it the Stanislaw Staszic University.

Here are the arguments in support of such a solution:

1. Poland needs a university which would have as its main goal, not so much mass education as preparation of young, gifted people for research work in the basic sciences. Such a university should have a small, but carefully selected number of students, who are investing their aspirations in a scientific career. We think that there would certainly be no lack of candidates for study at such a university.
2. In many countries, various cities, not only the capital cities, have more than one university. This introduces a healthy element of competition, which should favor a rise in the level of education.
3. An individualized course of studies and participation in research work should be the specific program of instruction at Staszic University.
4. The Academy has at its disposal a large cadre of potential teachers, which is not used for the purposes of popular education. Creation of the University would open to the cadre the possibility of educating successors. Many scientists, who are reluctant to teach for various reasons, also work at PAN. At Staszic University, where the thrust towards basic research would be deposited, they would retain their own rank, and, simultaneously, serve education through the inclusion of young people in research. However, we establish that only productive persons be included in the cadre of Staszic University.

which would enable, to some extent when the opportunity arises, saying goodbye to those who have come upon science by mistake (which is a problem of many of PAN's institutes).

5. The University is also needed by scientists from the present PAN. For it would allow them to work at an institution with definite and respected traditions of freedom of scientific research and organizational autonomy.

6. The specific character of Staszic University should be the thrust towards certain courses of study that are presently more weakly represented or generally missing. Besides traditional disciplines, the new university should have space, for example, for the Eastern Institute, which deals with the historical and social problems of this part of Europe and the world. There may be many program ideas of this type. They would, so we think, increase the attractiveness of Staszic University in the eyes of its future students.

7. The idea presented here probably would not bring any expenses with it. Obviously, only an accurate calculation could give a categorical answer here. However, it seems to us that the assumption is correct. Staszic University must not cost more than PAN. An element of our idea (about this later) is the elimination of the overly inflated PAN bureaucracy. We would not be surprised if, in effect, the realization of this plan even brought certain savings. Furthermore, even in a crisis situation, we cannot become paralyzed at the thought of expenses. The state gives science such small amounts in comparison with other countries, that savings should really be sought elsewhere.

8. This transformation should be prepared very accurately. The basic object is the exclusion of the bureaucratic-official "mountain" of PAN (department secretariats, Academy secretariat, etc.) from participating in this initiative. This would be a foolish idea if its realization, when the opportunity arises, did not succeed in getting rid of the said bureaucratic growth. Obviously, the new university will also require officeholders and administration. But they will fulfill service, and not management, functions. The Academy Institutes have a lot of self-sacrificing, competent administrative workers, who could become the basis of an administrative cadre for the new university. What precisely would be transformed into Staszic University is a very basic matter for consideration. Would only the people, or also entire structures of the institutes, pass through there? Thus, it would be necessary to solve the following question: which elements of PAN's organizational structure will be retained, which changed, and which abolished? The elimination of PAN's bureaucratic headquarters, located in the Palace of Culture and Science, largely solves the problem of rooms for the new university's didactic requirements. There are also rooms in Staszic Palace. This should suffice for a beginning.

9. Realization of this idea requires political support. For the bureaucracy will protect itself; this plan is incompatible with its interest. Therefore, its fulfillment is also not possible, unless it obtains the support of important political forces. Here we should primarily count on institutions involved in the movement of radical changes on behalf of democracy, among which Solidarity is playing a basic role. We count on the fact that the plan, realizing values so close to that movement—such as pluralism and freedom of scientific research, will be supported by Solidarity at the public forum. We also count on support and help from the circles at Warsaw University, who have always been concerned about the future of Polish science. However, we primarily hope that this proposition receives the acceptance and support of our colleagues—scientific workers at PAN. We count on lively discussion of this idea. If the plan for creating Staszic University is realized, then at that time, apprentices from the old PAN will be found in a university structure, which has powerful support in the valued European tradition and a clear identity, and thus, they will obtain that which has been lacking since the dawn of PAN's institution.

OKP Calls for ORMO Disbandment Due to Paramilitary Character

90EP0055A Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish
27 Sep 89 p 3

[Article by Wanda Falkowska: "Why Is the ORMO Watching? A New Dilemma Has Arisen: Should the ORMO Be Disbanded or Not?"]

[Text] Recently a group of OKP [Citizens Parliamentary Committee, or Solidarity Caucus of Sejm Deputies] presented to the Sejm a draft decree for disbanding the ORMO [Volunteer Reserves of Citizens Militia]. While speaking, prior to the formation of the new [Solidarity-led] government, to the PZPR Caucus of Sejm Deputies, as well as during Sejm commission hearings, General Kiszczak insisted on retaining the ORMO as an organization which is highly useful and resolves many problems "for pennies."

I do not know what may be the advantages of the existence of the ORMO at the time when changes are taking place in our country and the surveillance of citizens is being abandoned. The powers of the members of that organization have always violated civil rights. For the ORMOists have the power of checking the identities of persons suspected of committing crimes or transgressions and escorting them to militia units on using direct coercion.

By virtue of the Decree of 19 March 1987 the ORMOists have been equipped with hand-held gas spray guns, thus facilitating the resort to coercion. In addition, they have been granted a number of other powers which had previously belonged only to regular militiamen. They were authorized to perform actions brooking no delay, such as inspections of sites or corpses, body search,

interrogation of suspects and witnesses, etc. Also shocking is the regulation admitting the possibility of putting up ORMO members in barracks "if necessitated by considerations of national security or restoration of public order."

Characteristic is the revision of the regulations under which the ORMO, which had previously been subject to dual subordination—to the presidiums of people's councils and to the minister of internal affairs—has now been subordinated exclusively to the latter. These revisions resulted in that the ORMO has turned from a social assistance organization, as it had been defined in the 1967 decree, into the long arm of the militia and a major member of the apparatus of coercion. Noteworthy also is the circumstance that the ORMOists gained the right to accuse citizens before community courts for transgressions, without having any training for this purpose.

Gen Kiszczak's assurance that it costs 1,500 zlotys annually to maintain one ORMO member sounds like a fairy tale. It may be that this is what it costs the ministry of internal affairs alone. But to this should be added the cost of the 12 days of work release per ORMO member annually, for which he receives full pay from his workplace. The decree also provides for additional work-release time in the event of "a threat to national security or disturbance of public order."

This is a high cost, considering that the ORMO, according to the figures cited by Deputy Premier Kiszczak, has 450,000 members (the rationale for the OKP's proposed draft decree even mentions 600,000). Thus the calculation is simple. Assuming that each ORMO member gets only 12 days of work release annually, we derive a total of 5,400,000 nonworking but paid days. To this should be added the expenditures on maintaining the premises occupied by the ORMO, needed for other purposes, as well as the cost of their equipment.

These funds should be reallocated as soon as possible for maintaining the militia engaging in combatting ordinary crimes, with the object of raising the compromisingly low crime detection rate and thereby also improving the protection of the life, health, and property of citizens.

In its 20 years of existence the ORMO has won neither social acceptance nor social trust. Any positive results of its activities are unknown to the broad public. Years ago, when the ORMO had first been formed, the entire Poland was decorated with posters declaring, "Sleep peacefully. The ORMO is watching." I think that we will sleep even more peacefully if the ORMO disappears from our public life.

Union of Democratic Youth Profiled

90EP0025A Warsaw KONFRONTACJE in Polish
No 7/8, Jul-Aug 89 p 31

[Interview with Piotr Gorski, chairman, Union of Democratic Youth, a 26-year-old student in his 5th year at the

Warsaw University School of Journalism, by Katarzyna Dolinska: "We Will Manage"; date and place not given]

[Text] [KONFRONTACJE] The majority of the youth organizations are viewed by their peers as being unbelievable and discredited. Do you not feel that the creation of yet another one will meet with a shrug of the shoulders on the part of the youth?

[Gorski] The organization is not new. It represents a continuation of the Union of Democratic Youth [ZMD], which was established in our country three times: in 1948, 1956, and 1981, and always dissolved after a few months. The ZMD was never discredited. Many youth organizations lost their credibility when they operated on very centralized principles and convinced their members that they had to be identical. The accusation that we are an annex of the SD [Democratic Party] is also untrue.

[KONFRONTACJE] Your headquarters is located in the SD building.

[Gorski] We would leave if we had somewhere to go. But why? The Union of Democratic Youth was created from a XIII SD Congress idea and we managed to register it just before the XIV Congress. The SD gives us technical and organizational assistance and does not expect anything in return. We have a certain program similarity and a common historical origin. Nevertheless, no one exerts any influence either on myself or on my colleagues in the province forcing us to implement a certain party program.

[KONFRONTACJE] You, however, serve on the Presidium of the SD Central Committee [CK].

[Gorski] Certain members of the Union have attacked me for this, the majority, however, support me. I did not become the chairman of the Union just because I serve on the SD CC Presidium. Before the registration of our organization, I was the chairman of its interim leadership. The majority of the people who came to the founding meeting knew me. Together we devoted the past year to the creation of the Union.

[KONFRONTACJE] A characteristic of youth is, above all, that it tries to be different and original. What will differentiate the Union of Democratic Youth from other youth organizations, those which already exist and those which certainly will come into being?

[Gorski] The name itself, "Union" signifies that we want to avoid centralization and formalized activity. People in regional organizations can draw up programs and implement them in a discretionary manner. We do not aim to represent the interests of the entire populace. Even if another 1,000 organizations were to come into being and were to fight with us, we say that this is fine. Let everyone have the freedom of choice. Those coming to us are mainly high school and college students from small- and medium-size cities. It is in those places where life is exruciatingly monotonous: one cinema, maybe a theater, one secondary school, where one cannot deviate

from the norm since if you were expelled you from school your career would be over. In other words, there is a great sense of isolation. The majority of those who came to the founding meeting were in Warsaw for the first time. Therefore, I believe that the Union will succeed in filling a serious gap. We wish to assure the organizations of their autonomy, above all their financial autonomy through the carrying out of economic activity.

[KONFRONTACJE] Will the procurement of financial means for work be one of the main tasks for the Union?

[Gorski] Not at all. But we must ensure our independence from the authorities. It is well known that the one who has the money makes the decision. The currently existing system of distributing money designated for youth organizations is senseless and as a matter of fact no one knows what principles it is based on. After all, this is not the government's private money, it comes from our parents' taxes, from lower pensions, etc. I believe that a condition for obtaining financing should be based on the usefulness of a given organization, and not on the number of members, since we know of cases of entire schools being signed up by the director for membership in the ZSMP [Union of Socialist Polish Youth]. In the distribution of finances we must also take into consideration the informal youth groups which will present specific proposals for activity.

[KONFRONTACJE] In the program proposals of the Union of Democratic Youth, there are many wonderful and courageous phrases, controversial proposals, among others, the development of a widely understood autonomy, modifications in the criminal process, restriction of the state with regard to possessions and functions of the state in the management of the economy, the return to private ownership, deideologization and political neutrality of the military, and the dissolution of the RWPG [Council for Mutual Economic Assistance]. The slogans are catchy and perhaps all the young people will subscribe to them without any doubts. How will you implement these ideas having a membership of 10,000.

[Gorski] It is not only the members who count but also supporters of the program. Often in different organizations or parties resentment flares up when a certain group has adopted their political views. I believe that we must not argue about who thought of it first, but rather get together and think about ways of implementing it. Our program does not appeal to everybody. On certain points it tries to get rid of the obsolete Marxist outlook with regard to the state, above all, the class divisions, in others it opposes church dogmatists. Of course, one must look realistically at all of this. Several Union members work on people's councils, and have already succeeded in winning on several issues, even if it only means including student dormitories under the construction department. For example, prior to this, repairs were under the management of the higher schools, and it is obvious that they do not belong to the construction and financial magnates. In Warsaw, members brought about a change in the name of Bierut Street and changed it to August Fieldorf Street. There were numerous

problems with this since the majority of the advisers had no idea who General Fieldorf was. These are supposedly trivial matters, but maybe this activity is better than the printing of thousands of posters and plastering them on walls. When we speak about the dissolution of the RWPG, of course, we do not mean that we will place a bomb under its headquarters, but rather we will seek other areas for economic integration within the framework of a United Europe. Today it is easier to travel to West Germany and even to another continent than to go to the USSR. Is this what friendship and cooperation is based on?

[KONFRONTACJE] How do you want to supervise the implementation of your program? Do you want to infiltrate the people's councils or parliament?

[Gorski] We don't have to run to the committee with every matter. We have our own competent people, for example, lawyers who have already set forth proposals for changes to certain laws, even those concerning apartment construction, and a method for obtaining land and credit. The strength of organization is that very young people between the ages of 16 to 30 are joining and they believe that something can be done and that it depends on them. We are not trying to become an important organization numerically, and we do not want our members to lose themselves in the anonymous masses.

[KONFRONTACJE] What are you most apprehensive about?

[Gorski] What I personally fear most is that the situation in the country will not result in a rapid change in the thinking of the youth. Hopefully, the many obstacles placed in their way will not plunge them into complete despair. Great differences exist between the youth from small cities and those from Warsaw, Szczecin, or Wroclaw. Here people mainly discuss passports, visas, and grape harvests, while there, people have not yet been corrupted by the materialistic approach to everything, desiring to safeguard their ideals. Currently, this mainly concerns allowing them to be active. They do not expect someone to come and offer them something, they only want to be given the opportunity. They are sensitive to all the injustice and inequity. Recently, I spoke with some colleagues from the Mazury region, who told me that a beautiful landscaped park, perhaps the only wildlife preserve in Europe for the heron and pelicans, is to be destroyed so that the Germans can build a hotel on the site. The older generation supports the plan because of the hard currency factor, while the youth tell me that they believe that this constitutes a new partition of Poland, but one undertaken through different means. They will buy out and parcel out everything, will set up partnerships and we will not even be taken into consideration. During the founding meeting, shaken by the massacre, the youth also issued an appeal to the PRC leadership. They are outraged that our government did not adopt an unequivocal position but rather wavered whether or not to condemn or only to sympathize with these actions. After all, this represents a delicate international

matter. The young people do not care about international matters when they see the faces of their peers on television being sentenced to death.

[KONFRONTACJE] What do you want to begin with to implement your plans?

[Gorski] The biggest task, and at the same time the biggest problem will be the working out of these forms of activity, the youth should do what it wants in order to find its place not only in professional matters, but also in the mental and moral sphere. We will have to make sure that the Union of Democratic Youth is an authentic representation of the surroundings, that it does not ossify and age, and become overgrown with activists. We had many problems with registering and at the time this seemed like the greatest problem facing us. Now, I see that the real problems are arising just as we begin our activity. I feel that we have many friends and therefore will manage.

German Reunification, Enmity Between Poles, Germans Viewed

90EP0060A Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish
28 Sep 89 p 3

[Article by Andrzej Szczypiorski: "Yalta Is Not Eternal: Poland-Germany"]

[Text] For 40 years Poland had no German policy of its own. This must be finally clearly stated so as to no longer cherish illusions. This lack was a consequence of Yalta, but, like everything else in this world, Yalta is not eternal. Polish policy must be prepared for various options in the future.

For 40 years Poles had an important motive for occasional hiatuses in the disputes between the authorities and the people. That was the German factor: the issue of our attitude to the German nation and German statehood. The authorities built their social pedagogy, and even more, namely, a dubious platform for national reconciliation, on a broadly conceived anti-Germanness.

But now several issues that were previously unmentioned or mentioned fuzzily have to be clearly posed. The fundamental issue is the memory of the war. Why is it still present in us? Is it only a question of immense sacrifices, or perhaps is it a consequence of that inauthenticity of national life which fell to our fate for a half-century as a direct result of the war? Other nations have long been preoccupied with the new life which they built for themselves more or less fruitfully after the war. But we, including even the rising generation, still feel crippled.

This feeling of crippledness is obvious, but I do not think that it is a result of the war. It is rather a consequence of that totalitarian challenge which we have had to confront while others in Europe, including also the Germans in the FRG, could afford the luxury of democratic normalcy.

As a result of the war, Poland found itself within new boundaries. To some Germans that was not only a

political but also a psychological blow. They lost their native land, just as the Poles born in the eastern borderlands, in Wilno or Lvov, lost theirs. Such Germans may be sympathized with, but one should not engage in disputes with them about the boundaries.

Europe as a community of many nations should be open to all. In such a reality the problem of boundaries is not a major one. The reconciliation between the Germans and the French has been a fact for many years. Alsace and Lorraine are not a subject for dispute.

The Polish *raison d'etat* is precisely such a reconciliation with Germany on the basis of the currently existing boundaries which do not divide but constitute a kind of natural determinant of linguistic, consuetudinary, and ethnic differences. And nothing more! Such is the sense of the Gaullist "Fatherland Europe" or Gorbachev's "common European home."

There remains the problem of the two German states. Both the division of Germany and our western boundaries are a consequence of Yalta. The traditional political thinking in Poland, which I term magic thinking, reduces to the idea that any violation of Yalta is inadmissible. For that would menace the Polish possessions on the Odra and the Nysa, which would mean dwarfing Poland to the rank of the former Duchy of Warsaw.

This is anachronistic thinking, because it presupposes that German imperialism is an eternal and immutable political category.

The history of the last few decades does not confirm this hypothesis. No democratic nation in Europe feels itself threatened by Germany. A threat undoubtedly exists, but quite elsewhere.

As for Poland, it does after all have reasons for feeling uncertain and mistrustful. This is due to the incomprehensible, and basically isolated, doctrinal resistance of certain constituencies in the FRG which link the question of boundary settlement to the issue of a peace treaty. But the issue of that treaty to Germany is primarily or, more properly, solely the problem of reunification.

It is time to state clearly and explicitly that Germany has the right to be reunited. For this is a fundamental right of every nation, which should independently decide its own fate. For the entire 19th century we lacked a statehood of our own, yet the enlightened strata of the nation never renounced one Poland.

Nowhere it is written that Germany will avail itself of the right belonging to it. I know many eminent Germans who have been proclaiming for years that the German nation is too numerous and too diversified to remain within the borders of one state. Perhaps this is true, but it is not up to us to decide. This is a domestic matter for the German nation.

If Europe still is sick, that is because others have decided the fate of Germany without asking the Germans their opinion on a most important issue of national existence. That was a consequence of the wartime defeat of the Third Reich, but since then decades have elapsed and the world has changed somewhat.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Emigration Seen To Aggravate Economic Dilemma

90EG0006A Rotterdam NRC HANDELSBLAD
(Economic Supplement) in Dutch 27 Sep 89 p 3

[Article by Henry Beunders: "Labor Exodus Leaves GDR out in the Cold"; first paragraph is NRC HANDELSBLAD introduction]

[Text] The Paulaner Restaurant in Leipzig only offers one entree now. Alas, there is no soup or dessert. "Of course, you understand why," says the waiter. For months he has been working two shifts—and not being paid for it, by the way. Even so, he intends to wait until he finally receives official approval to go "over there" for good. "My wife and I want to leave normally, not as beggars or adventurers." His two colleagues felt differently, and so did another 20,000 East Germans.

The consequences of this mass exodus are visible everywhere. In a remarkable number of stores and companies the only thing in the window is a piece of cardboard. "Closed for remodeling," "Closed for technical reasons," or simply "Closed."

For years the East German economy has suffered from an increasing labor shortage. Since the last emigration wave in 1984, about a quarter of a million GDR citizens have left the country legally or illegally. But now the situation is growing alarming. Whether you look at construction sites, factories, hospitals, or kindergartens, everywhere you see improvisation and gloom. Deliveries come to a halt because there are no truckdrivers. There have even been cases where patients waiting for an operation were sent back home because there were no more anesthesiologists. Because it is not just the young skilled workers, metal workers, lathe operators, and drivers who are leaving. Doctors, teachers, and programmers agree that that is the thing to do.

The East Germans who have been left behind, some 16 million of them, are reacting to the exodus with growing frustration. In some cases they are openly refusing to work unpaid overtime or are calling in sick. For years the GDR has prided itself on the fact that the right to work has become a reality in the "farmers and workers' state." Now it has become an obligation as well. The police have compelled Erfurt's remaining doctors to operate in other hospitals in addition to their usual one, some tens of thousands of soldiers have been deployed on assembly lines, and prisoners have been put to work in the chemical industry. Because there are no other workers available—over 80 percent of women already work and over 10 percent of the 2.7 million pensioners are still working—the GDR is having to make increasing use of "foreign associates."

Gastarbeiter

There are now around 100,000 of them working in over 800 firms. Besides the tens of thousands of Poles, there are some 53,000 Vietnamese, mostly in light industry; 15,000 Mozambicans and Angolans, mostly in the lignite mines; and 10,000 Cubans, who assemble trucks in Ludwigsfelde. Officially the GDR speaks in terms of "training" and "fraternal aid to developing countries," in practice the workers are worth a third more than they cost in pay, housing, and training.

The Vietnamese in particular were considered tough, indefatigable workers. Of course, 12 percent of their income went automatically to the Vietnamese state, which used it to pay off its debts to the GDR, but they could mail six packages of luxury goods home every year. However, the government is having problems with them now. Because of complaints from the locals that the Vietnamese were clearing out the already half-empty stores—last year almost the entire inventory of bicycles went to Vietnam—new regulations were issued this month. Bicycles, sewing machines, radios, and mopeds are now subject to taxes of up to 150 percent on the purchase price.

Vietnamese labor morale went through the floor. Whereas they had been real Stakhanovites with "norm fulfillments" of 120, 130 percent, "norm fulfillments" have dropped to 80, 90 percent, although that is still a bit higher than the average East German manages. It is anticipated that the current exodus will soon compel the GDR to invite more Vietnamese for "training."

"In reality the GDR doesn't have a labor shortage, it just has too many jobs," says former GDR journalist Steffen Uhlmann in Berlin. "Here the unemployed sit behind a desk. Almost 17 percent of the working population sits there doing nothing or thinking up bad plans. The planned economy only produces more bureaucracy. They're trying to reduce it but it's like scaring off birds. You clap your hands, the birds fly off and land on another roof." Instead of developing a long-term strategy, he says the ruling party's planners are just working at pragmatic damage control. He calls them "Socialist Sisyphe."

Reform

The last major reforms were introduced 18 years ago when Honecker came to power. Since then there has only been tinkering with reform on the margin. The fact that only far-reaching structural economic reform can still save the GDR is clear to everyone—except to the political bosses in Berlin, who only are willing to adjust something here and "perfect" something there.

Because things are better here than in Poland, Hungary, and the Soviet Union, the bosses think they are under less pressure to carry out reforms. Honecker is supposed to have said that he would not think about perestroika until they had to start rationing salt. According to some former GDR economists, the only reason the GDR is

still an impressive industrial state is that it receives large sums from West Germany. If those transfers stopped, the old men in East Berlin would have to carry out reforms.

More and more West Germans are getting the feeling of being trapped in the GDR morass and no longer having any control on what is happening. For that reason many politicians are toying with the idea of deploying at least the one thing the FRG has a surplus of—money. They are talking about helping to reconstruct the inner cities, modernize the telephone network and other infrastructure—in short, a “Marshall Plan” for the GDR.

Both groups seem considerably to overestimate the magic powers of the D-mark. The concept of a Marshall Plan presupposes a great lack of money, foreign exchange, or know-how in the GDR. But that is not the case. The GDR obtains foreign exchange far more easily than the other Socialist states.

“Inner-German” trade amounts to almost DM 16 billion and receives preferential treatment from Bonn, primarily for political reasons. That is not necessary. The GDR has duty-free access to the EC. The special location of Berlin represents a real gold mine. The toll that the FRG pays for traffic to and from West Berlin now amounts to DM 860 million. Thanks to the “mandatory currency exchange,” the 5.5 million visits to the GDR bring half a billion West marks into the till. Then there are the revenues from hard currency enterprises like Interhotel, Intertank, Intershop, and Genex.

In recent years the GDR has received loans totalling DM 2 billion, and under the table it receives a secret payment for every East German allowed to travel to the FRG legally. Estimates of that range from DM 50,000 to 100,000 per person.

However, all these official FRG payments to the GDR together are far exceeded by the money and goods sent by individual West Germans to family members in the GDR. Every year they send some 25 million gift packages with an estimated total value of DM 1.5 billion. In addition, they transfer over DM 1 billion in cash annually. Although the hard marks from West German citizens may represent only 5 percent of the GDR's total retail turnover of around 120 [billion?] GDR marks, when you remember that on the black market 1 West mark will buy not 1 East mark but 10, it is clear that the D-marks make an important contribution to the well-being of many GDR citizens.

However many D-marks the GDR receives courtesy of the division of Germany, whether 5 billion or 10 billion, all in all it is still a modest contribution in a gross national product of 268 billion GDR marks.

The real problem, as every outsider now agrees, is not money, foreign exchange, or know-how. The real problem is the system itself. As long as the SED [Socialist Unity Party] clings to the planned economy and its own leading role in that economy, nothing will change. And

for the present, it appears that that is just what is wanted. Honecker's slogan is the same as Adenauer's used to be: “No experiments.”

Dilemma

The dilemma the GDR faces is no small one. From a microeconomic point of view, it will take enormous investments to replace the obsolete production apparatus. That means borrowing more from the West, with the political dependence that would ensue. And that just when the GDR has achieved the ideal state of autarky in a number of key sectors (microelectronics, the automobile industry, energy supply), although the price paid for that autarky is gigantic (in terms of money, comfort, and the environment).

Real reforms would also mean introducing the principle of competition, self-management in the mammoth enterprises (the Kombinats), encouraging citizens' personal initiative, doing away with most subsidies on basic necessities. That would mean both a reduction in real pay in the short term and political pluralism in the longer term, and thus the end of the party's omnipotence and the end of the “Socialist alternative” that the GDR would like to be because it thinks only that gives it a *raison d'être*.

The other way to dampen popular dissatisfaction is to put more Western consumer goods into the stores. That would mean giving up the competition with capitalism once and for all, making the exodus even larger in the end—all of which together must inevitably be fatal to the state. Most GDR citizens realize that only the first possibility offers hope, however painful it might be in material terms. “That's why,” says an economist from Dresden, “I want to see the FRG give additional aid to Poland and not to us. Because if even the Polacks manage to make the transition from dictatorship to democracy, from command economy to market mechanism, that would have to be a signal that would penetrate even the hearing aids of the stone-deaf old men in Pankow.”

HUNGARY

Citicorp Checks Accepted From 18 September

25000457C Budapest MAGYAR NEMZET in
Hungarian 4 Sep 89 p 5

[Text] As of 18 September, the circulation of Citicorp checks in dollar, pound and German mark will begin at more than 600 foreign currency exchanges in Hungary. An agreement to this effect was made between the Hungarian National Bank and Citicorp, one of the largest American banks. The undertaking will start with a two hundred million dollar reserve, although Citicorp assumed responsibility for uninterrupted delivery should this sum prove insufficient.

Because of the considerable increase in the purchase of foreign currency by the population, both the OTP

[National Savings Bank] and the IBUSZ [Touring, Money Purchasing, Traveling and Shipping Co. Ltd] are suffering from a shortage of cash. The MNB [Hungarian National Bank] strives to increase the role of cash-saving tools such as checks. The Citicorp check is well suited for this purpose, because it is accepted the world over. On the other hand, it is true that if the Hungarian tourist cashes his tourist allowance not for travel purposes but because of a desire to preserve the value of his forint savings in this manner, he will make a bad deal with the check. It can only be cashed abroad.

It is known that, as of 18 September, people will be able to deposit foreign currencies in the commercial banks without inquiry as to their source. The MNB wishes to ensure that depositors will have access to their money at any time in the desired foreign currency. Of course, these sums will be paid by the commercial banks not in checks but in currency. Because thereby a further increase in cash currency traffic is expected, there is in any case need for a significantly expanded role of checks in the foreign currency supply of tourists.

POLAND

Open Publication of Annual Report on Foreign Trade Prices Noted

90EP0042A Warsaw RYNKI ZAGRANICZNE in Polish No 105-106, 2, 5 Sep 89 pp 7-8

[Synthesis of the Annual Report of the Institute of Trends in Foreign Trade Prices, with introductory remarks by Prof Dariusz Rosati, Institute director. The report was prepared under the direction of Dr Janusz Piotrowski by a task force of employees of the Institute of Trends in Foreign Trade Prices and the Foreign Trade Department of the Central School of Planning and Statistics. This is the first time it is being published (until now it was considered confidential), and, for the first time, it publicly reveals certain data on Poland's foreign trade, especially the compensation account. The report will be sold by the Institute of Trends starting in mid-September at a price of 4,000 zlotys per copy. It can be ordered by telephone: 26-89-08.]

[Text] This most recent annual report contains an examination of the foreign trade process in Poland in 1988 and the first half of 1989. Statistical information was used in assessing last year's situation, however, the examination of the first 6 months of this year was necessarily limited to describing the new solutions which were put in place during this period and to evaluating them from the standpoint of the economic reform program.

In the last few months the institutional mechanisms in effect during the earlier period were modified and certain new solutions were applied. For the most part, these solutions indicate a departure from the old centralized system of managing the economy. At the same time, in

large part these are solutions of a temporary nature which precede the economic model approximating a market economy.

Positive changes have been made in the foreign-trade process. Starting in 1989, the requirement that a license must be obtained to conduct direct foreign trade has been eliminated. The commodity jurisdiction of specialty foreign trade units has been eliminated and new, favorable conditions have been created for the operation of foreign organizations and foreign-capital organizations. The changes described will help competition grow and stimulate enterprise and economic activity. Changes in the banking system will serve the same purpose.

Some progress has also been made in supplying foreign-exchange financing to enterprises. The importance of currency and foreign-exchange credit auctions in the allocation of foreign exchange has been increased. But the attempt to standardize foreign-exchange allowance rates, and now the rates for the mandatory resale of a portion of the export receipts to the foreign-exchange bank, has not been completely satisfactory. The introduction of a few different forms of currency auctions for economic units means a segmentation of the foreign-exchange market, it limits the ability to optimally allocate foreign-exchange funds and creates unfavorable disparities in currency exchange rates.

The exchange rate policy has not been consistent. The rate at which the zloty was devaluated for long periods was not adapted to the domestic-prices growth index, which dampened the interest of producers in exporting and at the same time maintained the structural sources of inflation.

The state's price policy continues to be very unclear. However, the elimination of the foreign-trade compensation account and the establishment of the Export Development Fund are good decisions. The recent changes in the financial support of export operations through tax relief and subsidies took producers by surprise, making it impossible to plan the development of production. For systemwide solutions to be effective now, they must first be relatively stable and there must be consistency in arriving at a fully decentralized model of an indirectly regulated economy.

We hope that this report will help to better understand the problems inherent in the foreign trade process and contribute to a consistent implementation of the reform program for the Polish economy.

Prof Dr Dariusz Rosati, Director
Institute of Trends in Foreign Trade Prices

1. In 1988 and the first half of 1989, the Polish economy continued to find itself in the state of structural crisis. The small acceleration in the growth rate of the national income last year occurred while the internal imbalance intensified dramatically, as shown by runaway inflation. The external imbalance also remained, and the balance

of current turnovers in convertible currencies even worsened. However, the ruble debt dropped slightly.

2. In 1988 there was a small improvement in macroeconomic structural proportions. Nevertheless, the medium-term changes in the structure of the Polish economy in recent years did not correspond to those planned in the National Socioeconomic Plan. During 1986-88, the national income distributed, instead of growing more slowly, grew as rapidly as the national income generated. The growth rate of individual consumption, and above all, collective consumption, was higher than planned, while the growth rate of accumulation was lower. Individual consumption, whose share in the national income dropped to the lowest level in the entire decade, was scarcely 3 percent higher than the 1980 level.

3. The policy of stimulating export and importing producer goods, instituted in 1988, had an important effect on accelerating economic growth. But the growth in imported deliveries applied mainly to the second (hard currency) payments zone. The very low growth of import, especially of producer goods, from the first (nonconvertible currency) payments zone, greatly limited the development of production capacity.

4. Despite the imbalance in current turnovers in convertible currencies in 1988, the share of expenditures to service foreign credits, in domestic savings as a whole, again rose, from approximately 9 percent during 1985-86, to 11.7 percent in 1987, and 12.1 percent in 1988.

The share of government savings (defined as the difference in budget receipts decreased by subsidies and expenditures for social security and expenditures for collective consumption) in financing the surplus in the trade balance, also increased. This change is a sign of extreme fiscalism which deprives enterprises of its own funds for the financing of development and slows down the development of the credit and capital market.

5. In 1988 the inflation index rose 2.5-fold, while market shortages increased. The price-income operation of February 1988 and the wave of wage-compensation demands which it produced had a large influence on this. The drastic breakdown of internal balance was caused by the excessive emission of money, which surpassed the growth rate of the value of the internal credits granted.

Foreign trade affected the prices of consumer goods in a varied way. The surplus achieved in exchanges with the first payments zone had an inflationary effect. But this effect was neutralized by an improvement in the terms of trade. Thirty-eight percent of the favorable balance of trade exchange with this zone was the result of advantageous foreign-currency price changes in export and import. At the same time, the strong growth of market import from the second payments zone eased the pressure of inflation which appeared in the Polish economy.

6. Outside of Poland the most important process is the integration of EEC countries. The formation, at the end

of 1992, of a unified EEC market with no external trade boundaries, will bring about a large growth in competition and an intensification of restructuring measures in most of the countries of the European Community.

The agreed-upon quality norms and technological standards, and the procedures to verify them, are a serious threat to Poland's exports on the EEC market. As a result of increased competition and the anticipated reduction in prices of products and services on the integrated EEC market, Polish terms of trade may worsen and the volume of export may fall. But the integration of the EEC market creates some opportunities for those Polish exporters who are able to adapt to the sharpened competition. These opportunities stem from the expanded access to all consumers of the EEC and from the anticipated growth of demand as a consequence of the reduction of prices and the so-called creation effect.

7. Poland thus far has received no financial assistance from the IMF. IMF has made financial assistance conditional upon implementation of a compliance program. Its main elements are: There must be a radical improvement in the state's finances, incomes are to grow more slowly than prices with a simultaneous halt to inflation, and a tough-credit policy is to be applied. The Fund's experts recommend that intensive measures be undertaken to increase the balance of trade and currency turnovers in convertible currencies.

Jointly with the World Bank, three groups of projects were prepared which are to be implemented using the Bank's credits. But making the credits available depends on the progress made in negotiations with the IMF and progress in talks with the Paris Club on the subject of servicing the Polish debt. Financing of some of the prepared projects from the foreign-currency funds of the Commercial Bank and the Export Development Bank has already been begun.

8. In the past year the differences in the legal and structural forms of the organizational units which deal directly with foreign turnovers were consolidated. The conditions for obtaining licenses were liberalized, which helped to greatly increase the number of production and service enterprises which obtained the right to conduct foreign trade. In addition, a large group of enterprises appeared which were interested in the direct export of several dozen commodities and services which had been exempt in 1988 from the requirement that a license must be obtained to engage in foreign sales.

However, thus far only about one-third of the enterprises have taken advantage of the right to engage in foreign sales with or without a license. The remaining enterprises continued to make use of the intermediation of organizations specializing in foreign trade, which handled a total of almost 90 percent of foreign turnovers.

9. The removal of commodity control in exports to second-payments zone countries will serve to increase competition among organizations specializing in foreign trade. The rule, instituted in 1988, that the domestic

buyer can freely choose the foreign trade organization which will handle the import which is financed from his own foreign-exchange funds, will also serve this purpose.

Another step aimed at liberalizing foreign-exchange operations is the elimination, beginning in 1989, of the requirement that a license must be obtained for direct export and import transactions (with the exception of 29 commodities and commodity groups in export and 11 in import).

The changes made in the organization of foreign trade basically change the significance of the state monopoly of foreign trade. The progressive diversity of the organizational units interested in direct foreign exchange, although not yet reflected in the structure of turnovers, helps to open the Polish economy more widely to the world and to develop resourcefulness. The direct access of producers to information from the world market is gradually increasing.

10. In 1988 it was not possible to make a change in the basic proportions of shares in the initial capital of commercial-law companies. The State Treasury, represented by the minister of foreign economic cooperation, continued to be the majority shareholder in foreign-trade companies. The intentions of the economic authorities to reduce this share to less than 50 percent were not accompanied by any concrete actions in the companies.

11. The close demarcation of the production sphere and the foreign trade sphere is gradually becoming blurred, for on the one hand the production units are independently engaging in foreign trade transactions and participate as shareholders in the initial capital of foreign trade companies, and on the other hand organizations specializing in foreign trade are directly engaging in production activity and entering into various capital ties with production organizations.

12. Starting in 1989 the laws governing the activities of foreign enterprises and foreign-capital enterprises changed for the better. A new law on economic activities of foreign organizations gives them more freedom of action and greater financial advantages. This law sanctions the division of companies into companies in which foreign capital has a share (joint ventures) and foreign small-scale production enterprises operating on the basis of the 6 July 1982 law. Thus far, only a few foreign small-scale production enterprises have declared a desire to change their legal status into a company form.

Foreign partners are discouraged from investing in Poland by difficulties in obtaining supplies, high inflation, an inadequate bank and telecommunications structure, and the still-remaining monopolies. In addition, the unsolved problems include difficulties in putting a price on the material contributions made by the domestic and foreign partners.

The growth of interest in investment in Poland depends primarily on the stability of econofinancial rules,

progress in reforming the Polish economy, normalization of currency relations with foreign creditors, and on the development of a system of international agreements on the protection and support of investments.

13. Last year, implementation of the reform of the Polish banking system was begun. The National Bank of Poland (NBP) was assigned the function of a central bank and a network of commercial banks was established which will fulfill credit, accounting and savings functions. The functioning of many commercial banks on competitive terms will make it possible to offer better money and credit service to enterprises.

14. In 1988, systems changes were made which affected the rules for the functioning of foreign-exchange accounts in enterprises. A process of standardizing foreign-exchange allowance rates was begun. The individual rates were converted into five group rates, differentiated according to the degree of processing of exported commodities. This solution should be considered temporary until a completely standardized rate is achieved which will define what part of the receipts from export will remain at the exclusive disposal of the owners.

In 1988, differentiated forms of foreign-exchange allowance accounts were retained. The assets accounts were accompanied by special reporting accounts and clearing foreign-exchange allowance accounts.

The ability to send funds from foreign-exchange allowances to coproducers resulted in an increase in foreign-exchange transfers between enterprises. They comprised over 30 percent of the operations in foreign-exchange accounts.

The ability to convert clearing funds into free foreign-exchange was a serious threat to the capital liquidity of foreign-exchange accounts. This ability was eliminated by the new foreign-exchange law which went into effect on 15 March 1989.

15. The range of currency auctions for economic organizations was expanded and at the same time a few new forms of auctions for various categories and economic organizations were introduced. But the existence of different forms of currency auctions causes disintegration in the area of foreign-exchange financing and segmentation in the foreign-exchange market. At the same time, it leads to the appearance of different levels of foreign currency exchange rates, which complicates economic accounting.

16. The importance of foreign-exchange credits intended for export-oriented investment is gradually growing. They were granted mainly by the Commercial Bank and the Export Development Bank. In 1988 the share of foreign-exchange credits in the financing of all free foreign-exchange import was 4.3 percent, however it was 36.6 percent in the financing of free foreign-exchange investment import. Thus foreign exchange credits are becoming an important source of investment for the import of investment goods. Thus far, the multiplying

effect of foreign-exchange credits, in the form of a growth of receipts from free foreign-exchange export, amounted to \$6.60 for \$1 of credit.

17. Efforts to enlarge the role of decentralized forms of foreign-exchange allocation did not bring about any real change in the foreign-exchange financing of the Polish economy. Despite the growth in the number of foreign-exchange accounts in enterprises, the scale of the turnovers in these accounts, and the increased range of currency auctions and foreign-exchange crediting, central distribution of foreign-exchange continues to be the dominant form of foreign-exchange financing. It facilitated the financing of 61 percent of the free foreign-exchange import in 1988 and 60 percent of this import in the first 4 months of 1989.

18. Actions aimed at limiting the range of accounts-settlement at official prices in foreign trade continued. In 1988 the number of commodity items bought and sold at official prices dropped twofold. Nevertheless, these prices continue to be in effect on: coal and coke exported to the first payments zone, crude oil and fuel oil, gasoline and diesel oil, iron ore, artificial and lime fertilizers, and cellulose imported from the second payments zone, as well as on basic farm-food commodities. Limiting the range of settlement-of-accounts at official prices in foreign trade, therefore, did not really change the range of the effect of external price ratios on domestic prices. The range of official prices in domestic accounts-settlement, especially in the turnover of means of production, continued to be much wider than in foreign accounts-settlements.

Serious deviations in domestic prices of many basic raw and other materials from free foreign-exchange transaction prices remained and sometimes became larger. In order to bring domestic price ratios closer to those of foreign prices, it appears essential that a policy of official prices be conducted similar to the currency exchange-rate policy begun in the spring of 1987, i.e., one based on frequent but relatively small, one-time adaptations of domestic prices to foreign prices.

19. During the period examined, and especially late in 1988 and early in 1989, setbacks occurred in the implementation of an active exchange-rate policy. The rate of change in currency-exchange rates was lower than the growth rate of domestic prices. This caused a decline in export profits and in effect, lessened the interest of producers in a growth of export. Throughout all of 1988 the currency exchange rate ensured that 77.5 percent of the export to the first payments zone would be profitable, and 76.1 percent of the free foreign-exchange export. Thus the legal principle according to which the exchange rate should ensure profitability of at least 80 percent of the export to each payments zone was not implemented.

The rule of a submarginal exchange rate is a temporary solution. The currency-exchange rate should ultimately result from the relationship of supply and demand for foreign currency.

20. The deviation of the exchange rate of the dollar in zlotys, according to NBP records, from the open market rate of the dollar and the Polish Savings Bank (PKO) merchandise dollar certificate, remained, and late in 1988 even increased. The deviation in the rate of the dollar, according to NBP, was only slightly smaller than the rates obtained at the various currency auctions. Under these circumstances, and when there is deep internal imbalance and lack of a restrictive money policy, it appears doubtful that the NBP currency exchange rate could come very close to the open market exchange rate.

The large number of currency exchange rates appearing in the Polish economy, all of which are official sanctioned, is the consequence of a segmented currency market and a still relatively small range of transactions conducted on these submarkets. The administratively imposed segmentation of the currency market is responsible for the fact that the particular rates are determined by various heterogeneous factors. In such a situation, the informational role of the exchange rate as an economic parameter is very limited, and the diversity of the exchange rates on the particular markets intensifies the pressure on the growth of the dollar exchange rate according to NBP, and also increases the inflation pressure. The individual segments of the currency market must be integrated as quickly as possible and a joint currency auction must be established for all organizational units, which must then be converted to a money market exchange. Only the formation of a money market exchange will give reason to abandon the principle of a submarginal exchange rate and movement to a currency exchange rate policy of balanced supply and demand for foreign currency.

21. In 1988 the elimination of the foreign trade compensation account was begun. Supplemental payments of a discretionary nature began to be replaced with parametric supplements. Starting 1 January 1988, uniform subsidies to farm-food export in the form of a percentage supplement to the currency exchange rate were applied. Starting 1 July 1988, lump sum supplements were applied to free foreign exchange export for 31 groups of industrial commodities.

According to the provisions of the 15 February 1989 law, the Export Development Fund was established and the foreign trade compensation account was eliminated. The Fund's main task is to give financial support to organizational units which undertake to restructure production so as to orient it towards export and improve the efficiency of export production.

22. Due to the changes in the rules for subsidizing foreign trade, in 1988 the supplement payment for export as a whole dropped to 8.6 percent (in 1987 it was 10.9 percent), and in the case of ruble export it dropped from 13.9 percent in 1987 to 10.6 percent. These supplements covered 85 percent of the producer-exporters' losses. The largest amounts of export supplements were used to subsidize the unprofitable export of farm-food

products, light industry, metallurgy, iron and nonferrous metals, means of transport and chemical products.

23. Export supplements on farm-food articles, together with farm subsidies, in 1988 covered 87 percent of the export of this group of commodities to the first payments zone and 67 percent to the second payments zone. The average rate of the total compensation supplement amounted to 84 percent in ruble export and 44 percent in free foreign exchange export. On the other hand, the uniform farm subsidy in relation to the total amount of export supplements was 19.5 percent. In the second half of 1988 lump-sum supplements made up approximately 26 percent of the supplemental payments to free foreign exchange export on commodities other than farm food.

24. Last year, additional payments to import rose very greatly (92 percent in comparison with 1987), however the share of compensation charges in import in total receipts to the foreign trade compensation account dropped.

25. Another solution which corrected the function of the currency exchange rate during the period discussed, was the income tax reduction granted by virtue of export. Due to changes in the method of calculating this reduction, which consisted of discontinuing the reduction on the increased amount of export, as well as due to the lowering of the reduction rate and decreasing the sum of these tax reductions by 25 percent where export supplements were taken advantage of (with the exception of farm subsidies), the role of these tax reductions in the export support system diminished. The share of tax reductions by virtue of export in the total amount of income tax relief, dropped from 53.5 percent in 1987 to 33.7 percent in 1988.

26. In 1988, reductions in taxes on the growth of salaries and prizes paid from the fund of the minister of foreign economic cooperation, acted as a stimulant to exporters. These reductions made it possible for the producers to pay for the higher, in general, labor intensiveness of production for export than production intended for the domestic market. The elimination of tax on above-norm payments of salaries and in connection with this, the reduction of this tax as of 1989, means that the system for financially stimulating export was been weakened.

However, prizes from central funds have been retained. During the entire period, three entitlements to prizes for export from the minister's fund have been delineated: for free foreign exchange export, for fulfillment of international obligations within the framework of CEMA, and for special achievements in export. Starting in 1989, all organizational units came under the prize rules, in the private sector as well as in the public sector, with the exception of foreign organizations and foreign-capital organizations.

27. In 1988 tariff charges in commercial turnovers were applied only to free foreign exchange import. The average degree of nominal protection calculated relative to import from the second payments zone, was 7.5

percent. On 1 January 1989 a new tariff went into effect and applied to import from the first as well as the second payments zone. In constructing the rates of the new single-column tariff it was assumed that the amount of tariff protection would not be increased.

Under present conditions the tariff's main function is fiscal. However, to a small degree tariffs are a means of protection of the Polish economy or a means of shaping the commodity structure of import. The size of import depends primarily on having foreign exchange or zlotys funds, which in turn is determined by the regulations in effect governing the granting of foreign-exchange financial assistance to enterprises.

28. The direct means for regulating Polish foreign trade are export and import quotas and permits. It is necessary to apply these means because of the country's payments situation on the one hand, and on the other hand because of international obligations to the socialist countries and agreements with the second payments zone countries, which place restrictions on Poland in its export to these countries.

ROMANIA

Visiting Exile Likens Bucharest to Labor Camp

90EB0016A Rotterdam NRC HANDELSBLAD in
Dutch 22 Sep 89 p 5

[Article by Sorin Alexandrescu: "At Home in No-Man's-Land"; first paragraph is NRC HANDELSBLAD introduction]

[Text] Fifteen years ago the Romanian Sorin Alexandrescu, who now lives in the Netherlands, was in Romania for the last time. Officially he is an "enemy of the state," but for humanitarian reasons he recently was given permission to visit Romania. "We must say it aloud: Bucharest has become a labor camp."

I am traveling toward death. I cannot let go of that thought. Is it really me, this person who is walking past the ticket windows, or am I perhaps watching a tasteless movie in which a man is flown to a country where supposedly he lived a long time ago. Schiphol disappears behind the horizon. Silent, imprisoned in the air, nothing is moving except for the hands of my watch which bring me back to the point I came from, to the origin I have forgotten, involved as I was in becoming something else. I am not going anywhere, I am returning somewhere; I am falling into a hole full of undigested memories, desires, frustrations. Shortly I will not be descending in Bucharest, but in myself.

All emigrants, as far as I know, are tortured by the same nightmare; they dream they went back, or were brought back, to their country of origin and that they get stuck there; they wake up screaming with fear, become aware of where they are and yet are not happy about it. For many years I suffered from what I called "the dream of

the antiemigrant": I voluntarily returned to Bucharest and was met at the North Station, or at the airport, by dozens of cheering old friends who passionately embraced me; that exuberance made me so intensely happy that, driven by emotions, I broke away from that world and returned to this world of loneliness crying with happiness. What is going to happen at the Otopeni Airport presently?

I had been told that I could get the entry visa for humanitarian reasons. Something peculiar resounds in this cliché of sympathy. For just imagine that this sympathy were genuine; then why should it have become the topic of an official announcement? Apparently the authorities do not refer to the reason for my application but to the motivation of their decision. The decision maker, and not my personal problem, is the focus of this report: in other words, he is prepared to make an exception to the normal procedure, on the basis of his humanity he violates the rules which he or someone else ought to apply officially to deny me the visa.

To me this implies that the visa is not granted to the individual who has good reasons to request it, but to the one who *deserves* that the decisionmaker look at his case in a humanitarian manner. The same criteria are applied to an entry visa for a foreigner in Romania as to the departure visa for a Romanian: the applicant must have deserved it. The applicant succeeds thanks to either a service in return or to an excess of sorrow.

Apparently I bungled the first opportunity, but fortunately for me the decisionmaker sympathizes with my grief. The approaching death of the person I have come for thus is weighed against my dereliction, my treason: *politicizing of death*. At the airport I am literally addressed as "enemy of the state;" if I do something suspicious I will be deported immediately. Thus I am being imprisoned in the cage of respect for someone's sorrow. I must timidly remain behind the bars of my personal sorrow and not leave there to go to the sorrows of others. I am allowed to watch death privately, but I am not allowed to see the death of society.

When I arrived in Bucharest that evening I could not believe my eyes: there was no one in the streets; here and there a lamp, otherwise everything was pitch-dark, a black hole, no cars. A deserted city. Have I been kidnapped in a foreign city? This is no Bucharest; this is not my spirited Bucharest which I left 15 years ago. This astonishment stays with me. During the day I take the tram along the Soseaua Stefan cel Mare. Everywhere there are excavated construction sites: new apartment buildings, the metro, new traffic junctions. The new apartment buildings are not only ugly, but due to a complete lack of final finishing, they also look worn out already.

We are waiting at a tramway stop. When the tram arrives, a cloud of dust rises up. We push ahead through it: the last passengers are still hanging on to the steps when the tram leaves. Inside there is nothing to hold on

to; everything is loose. The handrails are so dirty that my hands have turned a dirty black when I get off. No one speaks. Silence. They look straight ahead with tired eyes, as if they are blind. Hunched over, shabby clothes, neither angry nor apathetic; only distorted by a silent desperation, crushed by everything they experience daily.

Such scenes I had only seen in Romania after the war in isolated provincial towns. Later on, around 1970, I encountered the same thing in North Africa. The enormous pauperization of people and the wearing out of material whose parts are no longer replaced has brought Romania back to the time of the war, or transferred it to the Third World.

But there is more. The people are downcast by the daily observing of their own misery. The humiliation is so deep that it has a paralyzing effect. It must be said aloud: Bucharest has become a labor camp. Barracks prevail in the city, and even though, in their shadow, old houses still remain standing, the atmosphere is oppressive wherever you go. All important intersections in the center are guarded by the police; all dissidents' homes, all embassy buildings, all institutes likewise; everywhere the *militia* is on patrol, the militia which is allowed to ask everyone "routine questions" as to the reasons why they find themselves in this particular street at this particular moment. Who is being guarded from whom, foreigners from the Romanians or precisely the other way around?

Soseaua Kiseleff in my time was the paradise of young couples; now one sees no one there any longer, except for heavily built, uniformed chaps, placid black silhouettes in the dark. What exactly are they watching? There isn't even a dog around. One might say that the city is in a state of war.

Suddenly I hear again the shouting of a young Romanian who had been in the Netherlands for a short time and told me his story: You don't understand, sir. There is war in Romania, there is war, sir. Or is it perhaps a colonial regime which keeps the natives under control with the aid of the daily misery and the police? That same serenity and deadly silence probably prevailed in the labor camps during the war. The much-discussed "passiveness" of the Romanians is a myth which is based on ignorance of their real status: the last inhabitants of a labor camp in Europe.

In the cafeteria of Mihai Bravullaan I ate an apple turnover which was hard to swallow. T., standing next to me, doesn't complain. Perhaps he does not want to seem unkind to me, or perhaps he stoically accepts the fate of all Romanians out of respect for their daily exertions. About 60 to 70 people are standing in line at the cash register for a little bag of peanuts. No one asks how much it costs, no one orders, everyone knows the price and the fact that you are only allowed one package per person. Other people join the line, but how did the first one know that *se da ceva*, that something was for sale? A line

forms out of nowhere because in the stream of unsuspecting passersby, merely going on their way, someone suddenly sees something and stops.

The normal way of things is the emptiness, the street with empty store windows on both sides, the metro with bare walls, the shop with empty shelves among which people continually search for something which in no way can be defined in terms of "shopping." This endless walking has no specific purpose and does not follow any course; you don't go to a certain store or look for a certain item, it is more like walking through the woods or over a terrain full of wrecked cars, or like continually circling the courtyard of a giant prison; you have to watch out for anything which might ever be useful, the smallest scraps of paper, or rope, or soap. You pick, you gather, not what you actually need right now but what basically you can use as an exchange later on. You have to be extremely quick or someone will beat you to it, and you have to keep on walking, otherwise you miss what might be momentarily available around the corner. These sorts of things block the human flow, this obstacle all of a sudden creates a space in which the old functions of buying and selling revive for a moment. Or might they rather be dusty store window mannequins which suddenly come alive but only have a few gestures and words at their disposal? No one says anything.

Silently, secretly, people enter the store one by one, throw a quick glance at the cash register, join the end of the line, stick to each other in the line, continue to move up by half a step at the time, pick up their little bag of peanuts at the cash register and disappear as rapidly as possible on the way to the next traffic obstacle. In the line they don't talk to each other, they look neither to the left nor to the right, but rigidly ahead, no smile, no story to kill the waiting period. I notice the tense silence, the tension, the terrible glances, the deathly desperation, the knowledge that without this daily hunt you simply won't survive. Words are superfluous, everyone knows what is going on, and if you have additional information you would be crazy to pass it on to your competitors who then would snatch the last apple from before your very nose. Hunters strayed from their tribe, traversing the jungle as long as their strength, their life, lasts.

I am walking through the streets of the past where the apartment buildings of the present rise high above the memories, crushing them and rendering them improbable after the fact, making me believe that I am now in Amsterdam dreaming that I returned to the city where I lived for 32 years. I am walking through a city where the old districts, the old homes, those trees and those stones over which I keep stumbling, indicate a series of oases which are separated from each other by a cement desert but which, behind the grey facade of the new Calea Mosilor, remain standing, aged, deteriorated, buried under a thick layer of dust, or perhaps mud, but still unchanged.

Calea Mosilor was then a quiet street full of old and mostly neglected homes. There I used to visit G., a writer

of stories about old neglected homes of prewar families, and I also used to visit M., a discrete, melancholy poet, and a little farther on I used to go to the American Cinema as a child and later on I tramped all those streets going nowhere, driven by the desire for a woman or invited to a conversation or stimulated by the bewitching summer nights which did not let me, us, sleep and during which we, students meanwhile, danced rock and roll through the entire Sunday night and then on Monday morning around 8 or 9 o'clock, after drinking an extra sour ciorba (soup), continued on to the university because we had to attend the big marxism lecture which was required for the entire college, and we had to sign the attendance list—such a nice regulation, you were required to attend the marxism lecture but not to participate in it—and what was the use of our arriving exhausted at those benches in the back and our hearing bits and pieces of argumentation on the unavoidable collapse of capitalism while we were still trying to find out who in heaven's name was the last girl we had danced with because, darn it, we had made a date with her for Monday afternoon.

There in that dead-end street off the Traianstreet very close to my parental home I still see through the window of the taxi the open spot where my father and I buried our little dog in 1957 after it had probably been poisoned by a neighbor. That night I had returned home very late from a 10-hour-long meeting in which several students, including some of my friends, were picked up because they wanted to express support for the uprising in Budapest and the doors of the University were locked so we could not simply leave the meeting, and at the end of it those found guilty were arrested at those same doors. I arrived home and I had the feeling that the same insane person had actually poisoned me also in that meeting and now I am riding here and I cannot get out of the car, I have to go to the hospital where she is dying, and I look through the window, I sit here quietly as I did earlier in the airplane and the streets are whirling about me and I am being drawn into the past and damn it I cannot get out of the car I can do nothing she is dying in that terrible hospital and now I cannot even tell about all of that properly in Amsterdam.

D. invites me to his home. A pleasantly decorated small villa, a beautiful, intriguing wife, who speaks in the same unrestrained, ironically provoking tone as the elite in my time. Here the subtle eroticism revives which the women of then radiated and which now seems to have disappeared from the streetscape, the eternal Romanian woman, personification of the elite, unaffected by history, suspended a little above the daily misery through money, connections, and a little bit of luck. Her husband works hard, earns well, but drives a car whose motor stalls at all the intersections. He too goes hunting in the woods during the day, even though he does it in his car, but at night he is allowed to come home to his reservation. The elite survive, complete with their eternal cunning and charm, in the prestigious ghetto of the coloreds, halfway between the rulers and the populace.

We were waiting for the bus. Weary, I asked a woman standing next to me if she knew why the bus didn't come. A few seconds of silence. Afterward, in a low tone of voice: How long have you been away? I was taken aback. I was wearing ordinary clothes and I thought I spoke without an accent. What made

you think that, I stammered. I can tell from your expression, sir. We no longer have that.

Upon my departure I run into the man of the welcome speech again. He wishes me a good trip. "You have stolen my country." He doesn't hear me.

POLAND

Rapid Impoverishment of Society Pummels Poor, Elderly

90EP0013A Rotterdam NRC HANDELSBLAD
(Saturday Supplement) in Dutch 23 Sep 89 pp 1-2

[Article by Peter Michielsen: "Poor Poland. How Badly Off Is Poland? Very Badly"]

[Text] Bogdan Nastula wandered around for 3 days after being released from the prison, where he had served 14 months out of a 2-year sentence for assault and battery on his wife's lover. He went to Legionowo, his old village, but they had removed him from the registry there and had not taken the trouble to register him anywhere else, so he was not welcome anywhere else. He broke into his own house, but his wife no longer wanted him, she and her father got him out of the house, and she called the police.

And after 3 days Bogdan Nastula—36, a crane operator by training but no longer fit for that because of heart ailments—collapsed in exhaustion at the station and fell between the platform and a moving train. That cost him three fingers on his right hand. And when he had recovered somewhat from that—he shows me the hand, with the bandage still on it—Bogdan Nastula went to the Dom Przyjazni, the House of Friendship, the center for the homeless on Ulica Knyszynska, on the road to Bialystok, on the outskirts of Warsaw. That is where he is living now, and he still does not know where to go next.

He feels he has been treated unfairly. What they did to me is illegal, Bogdan Nastula says. I should never have been convicted because the judge did not give me a lawyer and never told me anything about appeals either, I did not know about appeals. I had never had anything to do with the courts. And the people in Legionowo should never have removed me from the registry book. That is illegal, but now they say they are not competent to take care of it, nobody is competent, they give you the runaround.

He receives some money, 38,000 zloty a month, but some of that goes to his wife for alimony, leaving him with just 26,000 zloty, that is just enough to buy cigarettes. I will write them one more time, Bogdan Nastula says, and with his good hand he shakes the plastic sandwich bag containing his papers in the air, the papers that are no help to him. I will write them one more time, and if they do not respond, then at least I will know that I do not exist.

Many people like Bogdan Nastula come here, says Roman Milczarek, one of the two members of the House of Friendship staff. Released prisoners, people alone in the world, alcoholics, people with concentration camp syndrome, people who have been tramps for years, people who for whatever reason have no roof over their heads. We have room for 20 of them, then they have a

decent place to stay. In the winter, when it is too cold to sleep at the station or outside, we will have 40 of them. That is too few, there are 20,000 homeless and more and more every day, you do not need to come here to see that, just look around the city. There are more and more every day, but this is the only center of this type in Warsaw, the only other place is a home for women.

The homeless at the House of Friendship are actually only supposed to stay there for 2 months. We try to help them if they need an identity card, Roman Milczarek says, because usually they have lost theirs. But with just the two of us, we cannot do much, we ought to go to the doctor with them, would like to go, look up their family, look for a job, look for shelter, keep them busy, but we do not have any time for that. This is really just a kind of storage facility for these people. Send them away—that is the one thing we do not do. Some of them will stay a year or more, we have not sent anybody away yet.

Money

Poland is becoming impoverished—and at a very rapid rate. 250 percent inflation, an inflexible market, shortages: larger and larger segments of society are being pushed toward the edge of poverty. Halina Chrostowska is a deputy department head in the Ministry of Social Affairs. She rather resembles Simone Signoret, a stern blue-eyed lady who sits in her office in one of the Baroque palaces that the center of Warsaw is so rich in, surrounded by submissive, eager young men who hand her additional papers at her every nod, and tea, and rapid interpretation. Even so, in the course of the conversation Halina Chrostowska loses her stern equilibrium, and something like despair creeps into her voice. In 1982, she says, we were able to take care of all cases of social need, but then the crisis began. Last year the dam burst, we laid out 25 billion zloty for social aid. In the first half of this year we spent 62 billion zloty, our entire budget for the year. We have no more, but we need at least 70 billion zloty to meet basic needs. We will get no more, they say: the treasury is empty.

Poverty is escalating, exploding. In August prices shot up, prices for everything tripled, quadrupled, quintupled. You can see it, Chrostowska says: families that were still getting along decently 2 months ago are now approaching the poverty line. It is not just a matter of prices, of money, just as critical is the fact that we do not have a market, the market is empty. You cannot buy margarine if butter gets too expensive because we do not have margarine. You cannot buy a cheap sweater if the others are too expensive because there are no cheap sweaters, all sweaters are equally expensive. People cannot adjust their budgets, cannot work around it, there is no cheap meat, there are no cheap vegetables. The problem affects all segments of society, Halina Chrostowska says, with the exception of the private entrepreneurs there are no groups not dominated by the feeling that they are rapidly approaching the poverty line. And nobody has any idea any more of how much money people need to get along. There is a subsistence

income; there is a social minimum, but everything is changing, somewhere people are still calculating the figures, but we do not get them here any more.

And Halina Chrostowska stands up and gives me her hand to kiss, and when she says, "People work 40 years, in high positions even, and then realize they have nothing, that is a terrible blow," then you know: she is talking about herself, about Halina Chrostowska.

The poverty line. Nobody in Poland can say precisely where it lies. At the start of this year, the trade union federation (OPZZ) calculated the monthly minimum Poles needed to get along. Back then it was 27,320 zloty per person for a family of four and 25,074 zloty for an old person. Prof Antoni Rajkiewicz laid down the criteria for that social minimum in 1982 when he was minister of labor. No, he says, those amounts are no longer right, they have at least doubled. Nobody knows what they are. Twelve thousand civil servants are permanently employed calculating the social minimum, but things change every day, and we do not even have the figures from July.

Poles, Rajkiewicz says, can be divided into five groups. Group one gets along, does quite well in fact, those are the private entrepreneurs. Poles working abroad legally, and Poles working in the shadow economy, a total of 2 million people. The other extreme, those are the poor, people who can no longer get along without help from family, church, state, or relatives abroad, those are the old and the poor, the ill-educated, invalids, single parents with children, there are 1.5 million people in this group.

Null Group

And between those two groups there are three other groups: first the 7 million Poles with a house of their own, two decent incomes in the family, a car, their expenses are low, they can still save—that is the group I belong to. The second group, Rajkiewicz says, we call the null group, those are 5 million families, they have to watch their budget carefully, they cannot save, but their rent is low. And the third group, 1 million households, those are young couples with debts, a car, a house they are paying off—just buying cigarettes and alcohol is a big problem for them.

In the current situation, Rajkiewicz says, everyone is slipping downwards, toward poverty. Take me, in the highest middle group, our children have moved out, I earn 230,000 zloty a month, twice the average wage in Poland, but in the third week of August I suddenly realized that I no longer had any money. That was the first time in my life that we had spent all our money.

All the groups are slipping, and it is tough. The problem for the lowest groups is that they are being hit twice. They are struggling with exploding prices, but in addition they are not getting any help from family in higher groups because they cannot afford that any longer. In the past my wife's pension always went to our children and

grandchildren, now we cannot do that any more. In addition, there are the shortages. In the past there were ration books for meat, there was still some sort of guarantee that the poor would get some meat. Now the ration books are gone, and the meat is too, or it is too expensive to buy. The market governs everything, they said, but where there are no products, there also is no market. The gap between the first group, the rich, and the rest of society is expanding frighteningly fast, Prof Antoni Rajkiewicz says.

Rich as Croesus

The rich. They exist, and you see them, driving around in showy Mercedeses; in the luxury Benetton stores, which only accept dollars; and in the better restaurants, like Lers and Wilanow, where a dinner for two costs 200,000 zloty, almost two months' pay, with a glass of cognac, a French wine, smoked salmon. You also see them at the Skra Market, behind Pilsudski Park, where every Sunday 35,000 curious people come to gawk. You can get clothing and salami there, kitchen clocks and binoculars and leather jackets from Turkey, you can buy depilatory cream and fishing rods and baby buggies. The market is packed every Sunday. Bottles of German beer cost 3,000 zloty, Puma athletic shoes 170,000 zloty, and Adidas shoes 380,000, fancy prices in a country with play money. People get killed here, a friend says, for athletic shoes, Warsaw has become a dangerous city. You buy videotapes directly from the pirates here, and you know that the toys, the diapers, the Pampers come directly from the church, which receives gift packets from the West, because not every priest is a saint. I am going to Minsk soon, a man says, I will buy two Kiev 80 cameras there for a song, exact replicas of the Hasselblad, and then I go to Dortmund and trade them there for a Minolta 9000 plus a pile of money, and then I have paid for both trips and have a nice camera besides.

That is how the system works, because the Skra Market did not come into being by itself, it is run by a mysterious organization that calls itself the Cotton Club and sends countless Poles abroad, they travel all over the world, trading as they go, what they buy in one country, they sell in the next. People here say they leave with a box of nails and come back with a half million T-shirts. They trade their way through Hungary and Romania, they sell white cheese in Turkey and buy leather in exchange. They travel to Iran, to India. That is why there are all kinds of foreign packing at the Skra Market and nothing Polish, everything is brand new, nothing second-hand, and none of it is for sale in Polish shops, not the volley ball net and not the baby buggies, not the hair driers, not the guns. It is illegal to sell guns, but they do it, the policemen monitoring the market sit in their car on the other side of the area, and it is drizzling, so the cops do not get out of their car. The moneychangers who buy dollars and marks wear placards on their back, today the dollar goes for 12,000 zloty on the free market, compared to 1,000 on the official market. This is the free market, the only one in Poland. Here is where they plug up the holes in the Socialist market, and here it is dirty

and muddy, the sewer in the middle of the field has overflowed so it stinks. But here you also see elegant ladies walking around and East German and Soviet cars on the parking lot. Here alone you will find what is lacking everywhere else—if you have a lot of money.

In this scarcity economy it is far easier to buy a computer than a box of matches, easier to get pineapples or peanuts than white cheese, which traditionally was the food of the poor. That is because of the barter trade, people say, we sell our onions to Senegal and get peanuts in exchange. But people cannot pay the prices anywhere. Furthermore, you get confused, when you ask a price they say: 90, but you do not know what they mean, 90,000 zloty or \$90. Everything is getting expensive so quickly that nobody knows what 5,000 zloty is any more.

A married psychologist with a young child, and thus unemployed, calculates what she spends a month. Food costs at least 10,000 zloty a day, for three people that means 300,000 zloty a month, then there is 50,000 zloty more for rent and fixed expenses, 100,000 for the car, and then sometimes you need clothes and shoes, no, a family of three can scarcely get by for less than half a million zloty, not without tightening their belt. It is tough. You have got to be lucky, my cousin is going to be a croupier in the casino they are opening in the Marriott, in October, he is going to be paid in dollars, \$400 a month, on the free market that is over 4 million zloty. He has got it made, he will be driving a Mercedes soon.

It is not just the rich who have a market, the poor have one too, at Boryszewska, where they wait quietly with some modest goods laid out in front of them on a newspaper or piece of plastic: worn-through shoes, ladles, even empty beer bottles, and a lot of secondhand clothing, sweaters, even worn-out underwear, a cardboard baby buggy from the 1950's with the word "Turbo" painted bravely on it. The goods are shabby, the market has nothing in common with the Skra Market. No fantastic prices here, no athletic shoes, no foreign goods, and no moneychangers. A woman with six sweaters on a piece of plastic tells us that she has been standing here since 7:00 in the morning and still has not sold anything and, no, she probably will not sell anything today. But what else am I supposed to do, she says, I have a 30,000 zloty pension, I cannot live on that, I am standing here to earn my daily bread. She laughs a bit at that, but she will not sell anything today, there are no rich people buying here, there is no money here, this is a market of the poor for the poor.

The old are the most vulnerable group. Officially the average pension is 80,000 zloty and the lowest 56,000 zloty. That will not go very far, says Danuta Sobolewska. She runs a day center for old people on Ulica Obroncow in one of Warsaw's better neighborhoods. Thirty old people come here, every day, from 8:00 to 6:00, and in the summer they sit in the garden for a while afterwards. They get three meals a day, they exercise a bit, sometimes there is entertainment, a doctor is available. The center is subsidized by the city, except for the food,

which the old people have to pay for themselves, 480 zloty a day it used to cost, now it is going up to 1,500 zloty. Some of them cannot afford that, then the city helps out. The people are lonely, Danuta Sobolewska says, often they only have one another, and above all they are afraid, I see how afraid they are with the inflation. Because while I am the director, I am also a nurse, from before the war, and nurses look at people with different eyes, this morning one came to me and said he had had to put his dog and cat to sleep because he no longer could feed them. "My grandparents," that is what Danuta Sobolewska calls her old people, "I see how afraid they are, my grandparents."

In Supersam, one of Warsaw's largest supermarkets, old people shuffle around, from one half-empty shelf to another, happy to have rice, at 700 zloty a kilogram, because there has been no rice for a long time. They do not buy much more than rice, they do not fill up their baskets, at most they buy some macaroni, at 368 zloty a kilogram, and a couple of rolls. They take no cheese, that costs at least 2,000 zloty a kilogram, you do not buy that when you have only 3,000 zloty a day to spend. Nor do they take the bread, if only because there is no price on it, and the clerk does not know how much the bread costs, the price changes ever day. When they ask about the price, she turns away with a growl, angry and perhaps a little ashamed.

Behind the cashier at Supersam sits a long row of old people waiting for sugar. There is no sugar, and maybe none will come in today, but you never know, and so they are waiting, old people have all the time in the world, they have enough to talk about with one another, they are not bored.

It is these people, says sociologist Piotr Glinski, for whom the situation is the worst. Naturally so: they do not represent any danger to the state, as workers do, who cannot make it any longer and can strike. Old people and the sick cannot strike, cannot demonstrate, do not make revolutions. But the deterioration in their circumstances damages the fabric of society. These are people who are waiting to die. This is also true of the alcohol problem, we have a million alcoholics who ought to be given treatment and 5 million others who drink too much every day. That affects the moral and cultural situation in this country, that accelerates the erosion of all kinds of values.

To see the poverty problem at its worst, go to Ulica Grochowska, where the nuns of Mother Theresa run a shelter in a run-down building behind a little park: this is where they bring people who come out of the sewers, who have lived in stations for years and in junk yards, deathly ill, filthy, suffering from malnutrition. They have a soup kitchen, says an Indian nun, every day about 100 people come, we have 20 beds for the sick, we put out stretchers elsewhere because we do not send anyone away, we even have stretchers in the chapel. We are nurses ourselves, and we can call in doctors and psychiatrists. These are very poor people, these are people who are dying. And

she shows us the dormitory, a room full of emaciated patients, some are sitting on their bed, others are hiding under the sheets, all you see is the top of their head, they say hello, they talk a little with one another, softly. Some remind you of photographs from concentration camps: they are used up, empty, done for, people without life. An old woman lies stretched out in a chair sleeping, she was brought in this morning, the nun says, she has both legs in bandages, she had enormous open sores. "We don't send anybody away," says the nun. "People die here."

Poverty in Poland, impoverishment that is spreading like an oil slick. Of course the Mother Theresa shelter in Warsaw is as atypical of Poland as the Mother Theresa shelter in Rotterdam is of the Netherlands. But, apart from the well-educated, clever young people in the free sector, there are no longer any secure groups: everyone is slipping, nobody knows how much 5,000 zloty is any more, except that it is less and less. The country has lost its criteria, says Zygmunt Szymaniak of the Polish Committee for Social Help, which gives help from government and private funds. We give help when we see it is needed, that is our sole criterion. Last year we helped 400,000 people, we spent 7 billion zloty, if I had 10 times that it still would not be enough. When an old person gets 80,000 zloty a month, and meat—poor meat with bones—cost 4,000 zloty last week, 5,000 this week, and 6,000 next week, then that old person will no longer eat meat. Zygmunt Szymaniak says.

The Farmer

Of course not every old person is afraid, and not every one ends up with the nuns of Mother Theresa. There are some who are getting by. Kazimierz Poplonski has a farm in Jawczyce, near Ursus, the industrial suburb of Warsaw. In his living room he has plastic flowers in a vase made of small shells, and on the yellow walls there are plastic fruit, a large wedding photograph, and of course the Black Madonna. Kazimierz Poplonski is thin as a board, he has big bony hands, with nails that will never be clean again, and bushy gray eyebrows above his blue eyes. Kazimierz Poplonski is 83 and a farmer. He is doing fine, he says gallantly, he is making out OK, it is tough, but it has always been tough.

Before the war Kazimierz Poplonski had a construction company with 40 workers, but already on 2 September 1939 he had to flee, he worked as a hired hand on a farm, after the war as a forest worker, and still later on a state farm. I kept a cow until workers were forbidden to do that, then I kept it illegally on a little piece of fallow land. I did not have a horse. You could rent a horse, but one day cost 3 days' work. Those were hard years, the 1950's, the party was very bad, worse than the Russians, a lot of people committed suicide. The 1950's, that was the third war I have survived.

Finally I had a 9-hectare farm, with horses and five cows and pigs. And even a state license as a swineherd, but I never used that, I wanted to do honest work. My land

looked better than the land belonging to the state farm that encircled mine, they were envious, I galled them, and finally they drove me away with tricks, bought me out. Since then I have been living here in Jawczyce, I have 1.2 hectares of land, the house I built myself, with my daughter. Together we dug the hole for the foundations, and together we mixed the concrete. No machines, everything we have we owe to these two hands, and we never went a zloty into debt.

No, it was always tough. Today I work from 5:00 in the morning until 11:00 at night, Kazimierz Poplonski says, sometimes the day has more than 24 hours I do everything myself, from picking the fruit to selling it. I have roses, vegetables, fruit, berries, some chickens and ducks, a few rabbits. There is a market here in the neighborhood, behind the railroad line, I ride my bike over there, every day, and then I sell everything in an hour or two. I have my regular customers, from the village, but also from Ursus, the people know me, they know I do not use any artificial fertilizer.

No, you will never get rich this way. In the winter I do not earn anything, in the summer I get 60,000 zloty a month, 2,500 a day. Yes, it is not a lot, I do not have much to sell. Before, I rented a room in this house, but the man died, and nobody wants to live in a village. I live off the soil, the only things I have to buy are butter and bread, and milk and sandwich meat. I grow things I can sell easily. I am getting rid of the roses, people buy bread, not flowers, they do not have any money for flowers any more.

This winter was very cold, out of my 70 cherry trees only 1 survived. And now it is too dry, my pear trees are dying. The water in the well, Kazimierz Poplonski says, is falling too, the farmers have deeper wells. A pension? No, I do not have a pension, you have to have paid the premiums for that, and there was never quite enough for that. Oh, 60,000 zloty, you can live off that, but things are never very cheerful. But what else am I supposed to do? Nobody will hire an 83-year-old man.

Kazimierz Poplonski, farmer from Jawczyce, stands up to look for his state swineherds license, he wants to show it to us, but after all those years he cannot find it any more. I do not smoke, he adds, I do not drink, I do not gamble, there is no money for that. But we never went a single zloty into debt, and sometimes at the market I do not even have enough to satisfy all my customers.

And, yes, Kazimierz Poplonski finally is willing to admit, we really do not have enough, but my daughter lives here too, and sometimes she slips us a little something. I do not complain all day long. But I do calculate all day long.

ROMANIA

Fathers Abandon Families, Pocket Support Funds

90EB0044A Bucharest FEMEIA in Romanian
Sep 89 p 15

[Article by Cristina Balteanu: "Delinquent Fathers"]

[Text] How lovely, when two people who love each other decide to unite their lives for better or for worse and begin to build a home, a family, completing each other and realizing themselves, together ascending a road of work and hope. And how sad when a couple breaks up, each taking off in another direction toward an often unforeseeable future, fighting bitterness, regret, and loneliness. The tragedy of breakups is sharpened, however, when it involves children, whatever their age. Children are profoundly affected by parental separation and their childhood is irreparably marked by it. Letters arriving at our editorial office describe painful cases written down in between tears by spouses who did not seek help for reconciliation or child custody, or by children who, having come to the age of understanding, tell us about worries and sadness caused by divorced parents who continue to endlessly fight over children or to incite them against the "guilty party," throwing accusations at them during visits or trying to bribe them for proof of unilateral devotion.

The most touching, however, are letters talking about being totally and unequivocally abandoned by fathers. Whether they are legally separated, or under court order regarding custody for minors, or whether they simply took off, such fathers shamelessly abandon their status and obligations as parents. Thus, the evil they do to their children is twofold: First, they deprive them of their protection, care, and love and secondly, they do not contribute even a penny to their upkeep, thereby violating the written and unwritten laws of society and decency. We have a few specific examples at hand: Florin A. and Tudor V. of Bucharest, Vasile P. from a Succava commune, and Gheorghe P. of Brasov are sought by the militia to remind them of obligations they have toward children they brought into the world! What can be more shameful than to have to pledge in writing

that you will send money home for children's bread, milk, clothes, and toys?... Some of these men continue to draw children allowances, which they use for personal purposes, forgetting that this money is not theirs, is not a monthly present to them from society, but is meant for a specific purpose, sanctioned by the humanitarian principles of our country's policy. Others, having wandered far away from their previous home and not known to anyone on their new job, do not declare their former employment so as to escape court order to pay child support. Once they are found out they once again take off without warning, and so, here today and gone tomorrow, time passes, children grow up, and the problems is "solved." Moreover, in their old age some of them demand and expect help from children they abandoned just when they most needed love and care...

A mother will always do everything she can to raise her children, however difficult that may be; she will make every imaginable sacrifice, will ignore her own needs, and should she have to make a choice between a dress and a toy the child wants, will opt for the toy. Is it though honest to do so while the deserting father contributes nothing for months and years on end? Does such a "father" never ask himself, do my children, who begin school this month, have new uniforms, school supplies, shoes, so they don't have to look at other children with envy and sadness? Do they have what they need for winter, which is coming on? Does his heart not turn over when he sees in the street children of the same age as his children, whom he abandoned and doomed to unhappiness, does he not feel the need to stroke their heads and ask them with fatherly affection, "How are you doing, my child?"...

Dear readers, let us become aware of strangers around us who seem to have no past, who hesitate to answer natural questions, who seem to look over their shoulder, who neither write nor receive letters, who seem to live only for themselves. There will undoubtedly be delinquent fathers among them, men who abandoned both children and decency. We can help them sort themselves out and we can wake them up to reality. Some of them may even come to thank us and to be grateful to us for pointing out the way home, as to lost souls, out of the murky maze of their lives. It is worth trying!